Military Leadership Diversity Commission Decision Paper #1: Outreach and Recruiting

February 2011

MLDC decision papers present the Commission-approved, subcommittee-specific recommendations. These recommendations are the product not only of the logic and evidence presented in the decision papers but also the values and judgments of the Commissioners. Legally imposed time constraints naturally limited the Commission's ability to undertake extensive research. Thus, the decision papers present the evidence that was available and that could be collected during the discovery phase of the Commission. The decision papers were reviewed by subject-matter experts external to the Commission.

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INTRODUCTION

Unlike most other organizations, the military operates as a closed personnel system; senior leaders are not brought in from the outside but are instead brought up through the lower ranks. As a result, the demographic composition of servicemembers at accession directly influences the demographic composition of future senior leaders. Therefore, a necessary first step toward improving the demographic diversity of senior leaders within the military is to attract and recruit a demographically diverse population of qualified candidates from which future leaders can be drawn.

To explore this issue, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC) created a separate subcommittee tasked with examining outreach and recruiting efforts within the Armed Forces. The goal of this decision paper is to provide an overview of the subcommittee's findings and the Commission's final recommendations for improving racial and ethnic minority and female representation through outreach and recruiting.

Charter Tasks and Strategy

The Outreach and Recruiting Subcommittee addressed the following charter tasks:

- Examine the possible effect of expanding Department of Defense (DoD) secondary educational programs to diverse civilian populations, including military academy preparatory schools.
- Evaluate the ability of current recruitment and retention practices to attract and maintain a diverse pool of qualified individuals in sufficient numbers in precommissioning officer development programs.

Although the second charter task focuses on precommissioning officer programs, the Commission chose to further expand the scope of its assessment to include enlisted personnel. Therefore, the following discussion and recommendations are directed at improving outreach and recruiting for both the enlisted and officer corps.

Based on these two charter tasks, the subcommittee mapped out four topic areas to assess:

- *DoD K–12 educational programs*. Although the charter task focused on DoD secondary educational programs, the subcommittee chose to expand this topic to K–12 programs. The subcommittee sought to discover what DoD K–12 educational programs existed, to what extent these educational programs reached demographically diverse populations, and to what extent these programs have been evaluated for effectiveness. This examination also included gathering information on the military academy preparatory schools, as highlighted in the charter task.
- *Current recruiting practices employed by the Services*. The subcommittee explored this topic by gathering information from the Services concerning their current recruiting practices and conducting informational meetings with several groups of recruiters across the various Services. Both information-gathering exercises focused especially on the Services' efforts to attract candidates from currently underrepresented demographic groups to military service.

- *Demographics of recent enlisted and officer accessions.* The subcommittee examined the demographic profile of recent enlisted and officer accessions in comparison to the eligible recruiting pool.
- *Demographics of the pool of individuals eligible for military service*. The subcommittee examined how military requirements, including educational attainment, aptitude test scores, and height and weight standards, affect the racial, ethnic, and gender profiles of the population eligible for military service.

Commission-Approved Recommendations Related to Outreach and Recruiting[1]

In examining the four topic areas above, the Outreach and Recruiting Subcommittee identified several strategic concerns. First, although the Services have a number of DoD K–12 outreach programs and recruiting programs aimed at members of demographically underrepresented groups, there is currently little research on the effectiveness of these individual programs in achieving their specified outcomes or attracting youth to enlist or enroll in a precommissioning officer program. Second, data indicate that several racial and ethnic minority groups and women appear to be underrepresented in recent accessions. Finally, one potential reason for low representation in recent accessions is that a large percentage of youth are not able to meet current entrance requirements to join the military, with racial and ethnic minorities, and, in some cases, women, tending to meet these requirements at lower rates than whites and men, respectively.

Based on these findings, the Commission approved the following recommendations related to outreach and recruiting:

Recommendation 1—

The shrinking pool of qualified candidates is a threat to national security. All stakeholders should develop and engage in activities that will expand the pool of qualified candidates.

- ***The President, Congress, and State and Local officials should develop, resource, and implement strategies to address current eligibility issues.***
- ***DoD and DHS (Coast Guard) should:***
  - ***Create and leverage formal partnerships with other stakeholders***
  - ***Institutionalize and promote citizenship programs for the Services***
  - ***Require the Services to review and validate their eligibility criteria for military service.***

Recommendation 2—

DoD and the Services should focus their outreach efforts on early engagement. They should conduct strategic evaluations of the effectiveness of their current K–12 outreach

[1] The recommendations discussed in this decision paper are the Commission-approved, topic-specific recommendations that resulted from the Commission's understanding and interpretation of the findings from this subcommittee. Following the approval of all of the subcommittee-specific recommendations, the Commission developed its final recommendations by combining recommendations across subcommittees to reduce overlap and repetition. Therefore, the recommendations presented in this paper do not map directly to the recommendations presented in the Commission's final report.

programs and practices. To that end, they should increase resources and support for those that are found to be effective.

Recommendation 3—

DoD and the Services should engage in activities to improve recruiting from the currently available pool of qualified candidates by:

- ***Creating, implementing, and evaluating a strategic plan for outreach to, and recruiting from, untapped locations and underrepresented demographic groups***
- ***Creating more accountability for recruiting from underrepresented demographic groups***
- ***Developing a common application for Service ROTC and academy programs***
- ***Closely examining the prep schools' admissions processes and making required changes to ensure that accessions align with the needs of the military.***

Underlying Facts and Assumptions

Greater demographic representation in accessions is a key component of improving later demographic representation in senior leaders. Given that the military does not recruit leaders from the outside but instead builds leaders from the lower ranks, there must be a demographically diverse pool of individuals coming into the military from which to draw future leaders. Increasing demographic representation in accessions is, of course, not the only component involved in gaining more demographic diversity among senior leaders, but it is a critical first step.

DoD outreach programs and partnerships with other stakeholders that are tasked to address some of the key military disqualification factors will help in expanding the pool of qualified candidates for the future. Although it is not within DoD's mission, the Commission believes that DoD can play a role in addressing some of the key military disqualification issues through outreach programs and partnerships with stakeholders that are tasked to address these issues.

Early engagement is critical to expanding the pool of qualified candidates. In order to ensure that there is a large-enough pool of qualified and demographically diverse candidates from which to recruit, the Commission believes that providing youth with more opportunities and guidance for a more successful future before they drop out of school, acquire criminal convictions, or develop weight problems is essential. The focus on early engagement is not intended to be a focus on recruiting for the military at young ages. Instead, early engagement is intended to focus on programs that can provide youth with opportunities and guidance for more successful futures, regardless of whether they join the military.

Better strategies, policies, and accountability for recruiting from demographically underrepresented groups will help improve the demographic diversity of accessions. In other words, the Commission believes that a key part of improving the demographic diversity of accessions will be making sure that each of the Services has a clear strategy and set of policies laid out, such as a budget and staff devoted to outreach and recruiting from demographically underrepresented groups. Being held accountable to DoD in terms of having a clear measurable strategy will also help ensure that demographic diversity remains an important outreach and recruiting focus within the Services.

The recommendations will benefit all individuals, not just members of demographically underrepresented groups, and will help expand the size of the total pool of qualified recruits. Although these recommendations are primarily intended to increase the representation of racial and ethnic minorities

and women, many of the recommendations are not targeted toward any specific demographic group and instead are designed to expand the pool of qualified recruits from all backgrounds.

Organization of This Paper

This decision paper outlines the Commission's recommendations to improve outreach and recruiting as one step in securing a more demographically diverse military leadership. As background and in preparation for making the recommendations, the subcommittee gathered and analyzed information on the four topic areas described above. The organization of this paper rolls all of this information up into four sections. The paper begins with a summary of current outreach and recruiting programs, including DoD K–12 educational programs and current recruiting programs focused on attracting members of underrepresented demographic groups to military service. The next section provides an overview of the demographic diversity of recent enlisted and officer accessions. This is then followed by an examination of the influence of current military eligibility requirements on the demographic diversity of the eligible population. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion of each recommendation and related courses of action.

CURRENT OUTREACH AND RECRUITING PROGRAMS

Given that the military is an all-volunteer force, outreach and recruiting efforts play a critical role in attracting eligible candidates to military service. The importance of these efforts is further increased when the goal is to attract a demographically diverse pool of potential candidates for enlistment and precommissioning officer programs. The Outreach and Recruiting Subcommittee was specifically tasked with examining "the possible effect of expanding DoD secondary educational programs to diverse civilian populations, including military academy preparatory schools," as well as evaluating "the ability of current recruitment and retention practices to attract and maintain a diverse pool of qualified individuals in sufficient numbers in precommissioning officer development programs."

In addressing these tasks, the subcommittee found that the Services have a number of outreach and recruiting programs. DoD K–12 programs tend to focus on one of two goals: Some programs focus on increasing the number of youth that will be qualified for future military service, while other programs focus on raising awareness of future military career opportunities among youth who are not yet old enough to join the military. The Services also have recruiting programs specifically designed to attract qualified and age-eligible members of underrepresented demographic groups to military service.

However, there is currently little research on the effectiveness of many of these individual programs in achieving their specified outcomes or attracting youth to enlist or enroll in a precommissioning officer program. Therefore, the subcommittee was not able to fully examine the possible effect of expanding DoD secondary educational programs or the ability of current recruitment and retention practices to attract and maintain a diverse pool of qualified individuals in sufficient numbers in precommissioning officer development programs. Instead, this section provides an overview of some of the key outreach and recruiting programs utilized by the Services (including the military academy preparatory schools). Any programs that have data on key outcomes are highlighted.

DoD K–12 Educational Programs

The Services and their affiliates engage in a variety of K–12 outreach efforts in order to help improve youth outcomes, strengthen the pool of those eligible to serve, and educate youth about the military and its values. This includes the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC); K–12 outreach programs focused on interesting students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers; and military affiliate clubs (e.g., Sea Cadets).

JROTC

JROTC is a federal program sponsored by the Armed Forces in high schools across the United States and in DoD high schools around the world.[2] The JROTC program originated as part of the National Defense Act of 1916. According to Title 10, Section 2031, the purpose of JROTC is "to instill in students in the United States secondary educational institutions the values of citizenship, service to the United States, and personal responsibility and a sense of accomplishment." Legally, JROTC is not for recruiting purposes but is instead a program designed to motivate young people to become

[2] For detailed information, see ExpectMore.gov, 2009.

productive members of the work force and a positive influence in their communities. JROTC focuses on character development, successful graduation from high school, and career exploration. A rigorous curriculum promotes leadership, physical fitness, a greater understanding of society, and prepares students for college, a trade-specified vocational program, or any other career opportunity.

In terms of funding, school districts share instructor salary costs with the respective military departments, but the federal government funds cadet uniforms, classroom equipment, the curriculum, and textbooks and provides an operating budget for participation in integrated extracurricular programs. An alternative program to JROTC is the National Defense Cadet Corps (NDCC) program. The NDCC program is identical to the JROTC program, with the exception that the school district funds the entire program. The school district can solicit corporate, state, or local sponsors for NDCC and route funds through the district to cover all NDCC program costs.

Each JROTC program at the high school level is considered a JROTC unit, and each of the Services has at least one JROTC unit. Based on information provided by the Services, there are currently 3,443 JROTC units: The Army has 1,686, the Navy has 633, the Air Force has 886, the Marine Corps has 237, and the Coast Guard has one. Prior to 1967, the number of units was limited to 1,200. The cap was increased to 1,600 units in 1967 and to 3,500 units in 1992; the statutory limitation on the number of units was struck from the law in 2001. The current goal is to reach 3,600 units by FY 2014 and to encourage program expansion into educationally and economically deprived areas.[3]

JROTC has a fairly demographically diverse group of participants. While the majority of JROTC participants are male, females make up a significant share of each program—45 percent in Army JROTC, 42 percent in Navy JROTC, 30 percent in Air Force JROTC, and 34 percent in Marine Corps JROTC. The Army, Navy, and Air Force also provided data on the racial and ethnic composition of their JROTC participants. The majority of students in these JROTC programs are minorities—66 percent in Army JROTC, 54 percent in Navy JROTC, and 57 percent in Air Force JROTC.

To our knowledge, there have not been any studies that examine the effectiveness of JROTC on key outcomes, such as graduation rates, while controlling for self-selection bias. However, the Services track JROTC participants' attendance, high school graduation rates, indiscipline rates, dropout rates, and GPAs in comparison to the rest of the school. On these outcomes, JROTC participants tend to outperform their nonparticipating peers.

Other K–12 Outreach Programs

In addition to JROTC, the Services sponsor or support a variety of other K–12 outreach programs designed to improve youth outcomes and familiarize them with options for a military career. For example, the National Guard operates the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (ChalleNGe),[4] which targets high school dropouts aged 16–18. The goal of this intensive residential program is to "reclaim the lives of at-risk youth" and give them the skills and values needed to succeed as adults. Developed by the National Guard Bureau and DoD, ChalleNGe operates in more than half of the states, and about 75,000 young people have completed the program since it was launched in 1993. According to one study of ChalleNGe (Bloom et al., 2009), participants were more likely than members of a control group to have obtained a GED or diploma, to be employed, to be taking college courses, and to report high self-efficacy and social adjustment scores.

[3] See ExpectMore.gov, 2009.

[4] For more information, see National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program, n.d.

Other K–12 outreach programs focus on giving high school students a taste of military academy life (e.g., West Point Summer Leaders, Naval Academy Summer Seminar), and others are focused on STEM education to address the military's need for personnel with expertise in these areas. For example, the Navy runs the NAVOPS Deep Submergence program, which targets inner-city youth and offers them the opportunity to participate in simulated submarine operations and learn about related technology. The Naval Education and Training Center operates a program called Starbase Atlantis, in which middle school students attend classes with hands-on science and engineering demonstrations.[5] The Navy and Air Force also help support the National Flight Academy, which gives secondary school students the opportunity to spend one week in residence at the Naval Aviation Museum to study applied math and science.[6]

Military-Type Clubs

There are also organizations outside of the Services that provide education and training to familiarize students with military culture. These organizations are not-for-profit programs and are similar in nature to the Scouts. Such organizations provide boys and girls the opportunity to engage in military-type training, learn leadership skills, and gain knowledge of the military and its values. These organizations include the Army Cadet Corps, the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program, the Young Marines, and the Devil Pups (Marines). At the request of the Department of the Navy, the Navy League of the United States also established similar programs known as the Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC) and the Navy League Cadet Corps (NLCC).

Military Academy Preparatory Schools

Although not a K–12 program, the military academy preparatory schools also operate with the goal of expanding the pool of qualified youth, specifically youth who are interested in joining one of the Service academies. The academy preparatory schools originated when President Wilson expanded the U.S. Military Academy's (USMA) corps of cadets in 1916, authorizing 180 slots for prior enlisted personnel (Malstrom, 2009).[7] The reality at the time, however, was that few enlisted personnel would be capable of transitioning directly to a Service academy without additional academic preparation. Therefore, the idea of Service academy preparatory schools (for both the Army and the Navy) came about as a way to meet this need. Though there are also private military preparatory schools with programs designed to prepare prospective Service academy appointees, most of the cadets who reach Service academies via the preparatory school route attend the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS), the Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS), or the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) Preparatory School. The Coast Guard Academy (CGA) does not have its own prep school. Prior to 2009, the CGA sent some prospective cadets to NAPS. Since 2009, however, the CGA has used only private programs to serve the prep school function, as the private programs were found to be more cost-effective than NAPS. The modern purpose of the prep schools still includes their original mission of additional preparation for prior enlisted personnel but has been generalized to also offer opportunities for civilian applicants.

The prep schools do not do their own recruiting; instead, they select from the pool of applicants who do not receive an appointment to the associated Service academy (Thirtle, 2001). The prep

[5] For more information, see Starbase Atlantis, n.d.

[6] For more information, see National Flight Academy, n.d.

[7] See Issue Paper #39.

schools also do not charge tuition. To enter the prep schools, students enlist in the reserves at the lowest enlisted rank and receive pay as such. The prep school programs last ten months, and the curriculum is a combination of academic and athletic preparation and military training. Overall, the prep schools supply about 100 to 200 qualified candidates per year for appointment to each of the Service academies (Thirtle, 2001).[8]

Table 1 shows basic demographics for those initially enrolled in the prep school classes of 2006–2009 (which correspond to the respective Service academy classes of 2010–2013). From these data, it is clear that the prep schools provide opportunities to minority applicants who might not otherwise have been admitted to the Service academies. Over this period, nearly 50 percent of USMAPS and USAFA Preparatory School enrollees were racial or ethnic minorities, and over 50 percent of NAPS enrollees were racial or ethnic minorities. In terms of gender, the prep schools tend to enroll cohorts that are mostly male; enrollees at each prep school were 15–20 percent female. Twenty-five percent of USMAPS, 19 percent of NAPS, and 20 percent of USAFA Preparatory School enrollees over this period were prior enlisted. Finally, over one-third of prep school enrollees for each Service academy were reported to be recruited athletes.

Table 1. Demographics of Prep School Enrollees, Classes of 2006–2009, by Service

	USMAPS	NAPS	USAFA Preparatory School
Total enrolled	964	1,076	940
Black (non-Hispanic)	21%	21%	21%
Hispanic	17%	20%	17%
Other (non-Hispanic)	9%	12%	11%
All minority	47%	53%	48%
Female	15%	18%	20%
Recruited athlete	38%	35%[a]	39%
Prior enlisted	25%	19%	20%

SOURCE: Data for the analyses was provided by each Service academy preparatory school.

[a] Information on recruited athletes was only available for 2006, so the NAPS percentage reflects only the NAPS class of 2006.

Although the prep school enrollment demographics show that the prep schools offer opportunities to many minority applicants, the degree to which prep schools affect the demographic composition of the officer corps depends on the rates at which applicants complete both the prep school and the relevant Service academy programs. Therefore, for the USMAPS, NAPS, and USAFA Preparatory School classes of 2001–2004, Table 2 shows both the rates at which prep school enrollees eventually graduated from their Service academies and the total numbers of academy graduates. These prep school classes correspond to the Service academy classes of 2005–2008.

[8] Service academies do not guarantee appointments to each prep school graduate. However, there is often oversight by academy and prep school leadership regarding which candidates receive appointments.

Table 2. Service Academy Graduation Information for Prep School Enrollees, Classes of 2005–2008, by Demographic Group

	USMAPS		NAPS		USAFA Preparatory School	
	Rate	Number Graduated	Rate	Number Graduated	Rate	Number Graduated
White (non-Hispanic)	58%	306	71%	341	50%	231
Black (non-Hispanic)	60%	107	65%	135	59%	102
Hispanic	62%	68	70%	135	61%	114
Other	53%	39	76%	56	61%	60
Female	66%	98	68%	94	60%	94
All	58%	520	70%	667	55%	506

SOURCE: Data for the analyses were provided by each Service academy preparatory school.

Overall, 58 percent of students who entered USMAPS during this period eventually graduated from the United States Military Academy (USMA); 70 percent of those who entered NAPS and 55 percent of those who entered USAFA Preparatory School graduated from the relevant Service academies. Table 2 also shows the actual contribution of the prep schools to officer racial and ethnic diversity: Over four Service academy classes, the prep schools helped produce 214 minority USMA graduates, 326 minority United States Naval Academy (USNA) graduates, and 276 minority USAFA graduates. Among those admitted to Service academies, cadets and midshipmen who attended prep schools had graduation rates comparable to those of their directly appointed classmates. In the USMA, USNA, and USAFA classes of 1997–2002, 73 percent of prep school graduates who accepted appointments to their respective academies went on to graduate, compared with 78 percent of students who were directly appointed to the academies. One would not expect these rates to be the same, given that prep school opportunities are only offered to applicants who are not competitive enough for a direct appointment. Still, the fact that they are comparable suggests that prep schools are effective either in equipping deficient candidates or in screening out candidates who lack the necessary qualities to graduate.

Recruiting Practices

In addition to the programs described above, the Services utilize a variety of recruiting practices and programs intended to attract eligible members of demographically underrepresented groups to military service. Although each Service is in charge of its own accessions and has its own unique programs and practices for reaching specific civilian populations, many of the Services reported using similar recruiting strategies, including those for attracting demographically underrepresented youth to the primary precommissioning officer programs (Service academies, Reserve Officer Training Corps [ROTC], and Officer Candidate School/Officer Training School [OCS/OTS]).

The following list summarizes general practices used to attract both enlisted and officer candidates:

- Establish organizational divisions or offices devoted to recruiting members of underrepresented demographic groups. For example, both the Naval and Air Force academies reported having established a diversity recruiting directorate or division, and

the Coast Guard reported establishing a diversity outreach board and manager to provide a national strategy for and to oversee implementation of diversity outreach initiatives.

- Attend affinity-group events, such as the annual conferences of the National Society of Black Engineers and the Society of Advancing Hispanic/Chicano and Native American Scientists.
- Conduct targeted advertising, such as (1) creating marketing materials in multiple languages, (2) providing profiles of demographically diverse officers on main websites, (3) advertising in college newspapers at historically black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions, (4) using media and entertainment marketing sources directed at demographically diverse audiences, such as Telemundo, Black Entertainment Television, and minority-oriented publications like *Jet*, *The Root*, and *Black Collegian*.
- Use social networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube.
- Establish connections to community influencers (leaders, educators, and administrators).
- Strategically locate recruiting offices in communities with high concentrations of demographically underrepresented populations.
- Generally expose the Service to the community through participation in mentoring programs that are often targeted toward disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. For example, the Marine Corps participates in Toys for Tots, Adopt a School, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and a program called Big Bears.

Common Practices Across Service Academy Programs

The Service academies use many of the above outreach and recruiting practices to attract high-quality applicants from all racial and ethnic groups. However, they also have several programs that are specifically geared to their needs. The following list summarizes those common practices:

- Conduct targeted recruiting at demographically diverse high schools.
- Provide candidate/parent weekend visits to expose potential applicants to the academy. These visits often include visits specifically for underrepresented youth.
- Provide academy summer seminar programs designed to expose potential applicants to the academy.
- Design and conduct programs to recruit influencers (i.e., community leaders, educators, and administrators) and educate them about the academy, including providing academy visits and tours.
- Design and conduct programs to educate congressional members and staffers on the academy, including visits and tours of the academy.
- In the case of the Air Force Academy, hold a Service Academy Diversity Conference, in which directors of admissions and chief diversity officers from the other Service academies meet to share knowledge and synchronize efforts.

Common Practices Across ROTC and OCS/OTS Programs

Like the Service academies, the accession commands in charge of recruiting for ROTC and OCS/OTS programs use many of the above general outreach and recruiting programs. However, they too have several programs designed specifically to attract high-quality applicants from all racial and ethnic groups with college degrees or who have expressed intent to attend college. The following list summarizes those common practices:

- Place ROTC programs at historically black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions.
- Have a targeted recruiting presence for OCS/OTS programs at historically black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions.
- Offer targeted academic scholarships at historically black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions.

Summary

The above overview of current outreach and recruiting programs is by no means an exhaustive summary of the Services' current efforts; rather, it highlights some of the key efforts currently used. As is evident, the Services are engaged in a variety of outreach and recruiting efforts. These include K–12 programs designed to increase the future eligible pool and raise awareness of future military career opportunities and recruiting programs designed to attract currently eligible youth from underrepresented demographic groups to military service. As discussed previously, though, there is limited research examining the outcomes of many of these individual programs. Thus, the subcommittee was limited in its ability to examine the potential effect of expanding many of the DoD secondary educational programs or the ability of current recruitment practices to attract and maintain a diverse pool of qualified individuals in sufficient numbers in precommissioning officer development programs.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY OF ACCESSIONS

Unlike most other organizations, the military operates as a closed personnel system, with today's senior leaders being composed entirely of a subset of those members who accessed into the military more than 25 years ago. Therefore, the demographic diversity of accessions directly influences the demographic diversity of future senior leaders, underscoring the importance of outreach and recruiting within the Services.

In the following sections, we illustrate how the demographics of past accessions have shaped the demographic profiles of today's senior leaders. We then provide an overview of the demographic profiles of recent enlisted and officer accessions to show the extent to which recent accessions have been representative of the demographics of the eligible population. This also provides a baseline measure as to how well the current outreach and recruiting efforts are working to attract qualified candidates from all demographic groups.

Data Sources, Data Limitations, and Definitions

The data presented below come from DoD's report *Population Representation in the Military Services*, also known as the Population Representation Report (PRR). The data are from FY 1973–FY 2008, with FY 2008 being the most recently published dataset. We chose to use these data because they constitute the official report of population representation across all of the Services, including the Coast Guard, and are published on an annual basis by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.[9] In addition, the data we received from individual Services used different demographic categories and reporting formats. Therefore, we chose to use this common dataset for consistency and to facilitate aggregation and comparisons across Services.

It should be noted, however, that a 2007 Government Accountability Office report identified discrepancies in the data maintained by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) that were used to develop the PRR and the data maintained by the Services. According to the report, DoD did not resolve the discrepancies that appeared in the officer accession source data but only focused on resolving discrepancies that existed in overall officer accessions. Therefore, when discussing officer accessions, we make note of any abnormal cases of missing data that should be viewed with caution.

In order to enlist or become a commissioned officer in any of the Services, there are basic minimum requirements that all candidates must meet. Therefore, when presenting recent FY 2007–2008 accession profiles, we also provide a representation benchmark of the eligible recruiting pool using data from the 2008 March Current Population Survey (CPS) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).[10] For enlisted accessions, the eligible recruiting pool is defined as labor force participants who hold high school degrees or equivalents through four years of college (but no bachelor's degree) and are between the ages of 18 and 24. For officer accessions, the eligible recruiting pool is defined as labor force participants (i.e., people who are either employed or actively seeking work) who hold at least a bachelor's degree and are between the ages of 22 and 34. As we will discuss later in this paper, there

[9] For more information, see U.S. Department of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), n.d.

[10] These data were downloaded from the Integrated Public Microdata Series website, which is sponsored by the Minnesota Population Center (IPUMS-CPS, n.d.). The shares from the 2007 March CPS are similar to the 2008 shares: black = 8.1 percent, Hispanic = 7.9 percent, Asian = 10.2 percent, other = 1.6 percent, and female = 52.3 percent.

are additional enlisted and officer eligibility requirements that further define the eligible recruiting pool. However, the requirements vary across the Services, and many are allowed to be waived under certain circumstances. Therefore, given that age and educational degree are key factors that cannot be waived, we chose to focus on these factors when creating our accession benchmark.

Race and Ethnicity Categories

Following guidelines developed by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, we use the following categories when reporting race and ethnicity:

- white non-Hispanic
- black non-Hispanic
- Asian non-Hispanic
- other non-Hispanic (includes American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race")
- Hispanic.

For readability, we use the following shorthand for referring to different racial and ethnic groups: "white" for non-Hispanic whites, "black" for non-Hispanic blacks, "Asian" for non-Hispanic Asians, and "other" for those in the non-Hispanic other group.

Past Accessions and Today's Leaders[11]

As described above, the military operates as a closed personnel system with today's senior leaders being composed entirely of those members who accessed into the military more than 25 years ago. In Figure 1, we show how the racial and ethnic composition of accessions influences later leadership cohorts by showing the percentages of blacks and Hispanics[12] among the FY 2008 officer inventory and the corresponding accession cohorts across all four Services combined.[13] The figure contains three leadership groups—today's senior leaders, today's senior leadership pool, and future leaders—and identifies the relevant accession years for each group based on the promotion and separation timing defined in Title 10 and in DoD Instruction 1320.13. Today's senior leaders are today's flag officers and general officers, or those who held the rank of O-7 or above in 2008 (the latest year for which we have data). Promotion to O-7 requires roughly 25 years of service, and those who reach O-10 can serve a total of 40 years. Thus, today's senior leaders would have accessed 25–40 years before

[11] See Issue Paper #46 for more detailed information.

[12] The analysis focuses specifically on these two demographic groups because the PRR reports historical data on officer accessions for Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks only. Therefore, we are only able to present historical trends and analyze the impact of past accessions on the profiles of current and future leadership for these two groups. After FY 2002, the PRR ceased reporting historical data on officer accessions and began reporting race and ethnicity separately. Therefore, our time series for non-Hispanic black accessions is incomplete. Specifically, we have the historical data from FY 1973 to FY 2002 and, because we have access to the raw data from the FY 2007 and FY 2008 PRRs, we are able to calculate non-Hispanic black accession shares for those years. However, because we do not have access to the raw data from the FY 2003–FY 2006 PRRs, our time series for non-Hispanic black accessions has a four-year gap between FY 2002 and FY 2007. Although this gap obscures the most-recent trends in non-Hispanic black accessions, it does not affect the main analysis of historical trends and their implications for racial and ethnic diversity among senior leadership. The PRR reports data on Hispanics consistently across all years. For more information, see U.S. Department of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), n.d.

[13] The current figure combines data across Services to illustrate the influence of accession cohorts on senior leadership across DoD. However, there will be differences for each racial and ethnic minority group by Service.

2008, or between 1968 and 1983. Today's senior leadership pool comprises those who are next in line to promote to O-7, or those who held the rank of O-6 in 2008. Promotion to O-6 typically occurs between 21 and 23 years of service, and officers can serve a total of 30 years if they fail to promote to O-7. Thus, today's O-6s would have accessed 21–30 years before 2008, or between 1978 and 1987. Finally, today's future leaders are officers who held the rank of O-5 or lower in 2008, or those who accessed after 1987.

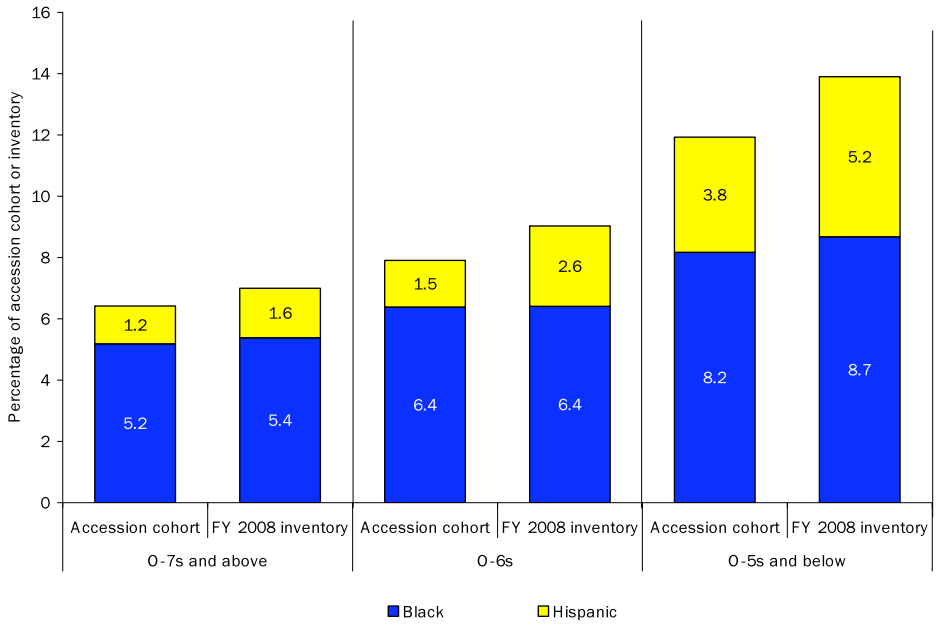
Figure 1 shows the percentage of blacks and percentage of Hispanics among the FY 2008 officer inventory and the corresponding accession cohorts across all four Services combined, broken out by these three leadership groups. Overall, there were only slight differences in the percentage of blacks in the FY 2008 officer inventory and in the accession cohorts for each of these three groups. There was only a 0.2-percent difference for O-7s and above and no difference for O-6s in their FY 2008 share of the officer inventory and share of the relevant accession cohort. For O-5s and below, the FY 2008 black share was only half a percentage point greater than the relevant average accession share.[14] Thus, these data suggest that the black presence among each of these FY 2008 leadership groups was influenced more by the black share at accession than by differences in career progression for blacks versus nonblacks. In contrast, Hispanic shares of FY 2008 officer inventories were 0.4- to 1.4-percent greater than the Hispanic shares of corresponding accession cohorts across the three leadership groups,[15] suggesting that career progression appears to have been favorable toward Hispanic officers.[16] The data also show that as the demographic diversity of accessions has increased over accession cohorts, so has the resulting demographic diversity of the corresponding officer inventories. All else being equal, diversity among O-7s and above should increase over time as the more diverse group of O-5s and below promote, though this transition will take time because of the closed nature of the personnel system. *Thus, a key step in improving demographic diversity at the senior leader ranks is ensuring that the military can attract and recruit a demographically diverse population from which to draw future leaders.*

[14] There was no statistically significant difference in the shares of the officer inventory and shares of the relevant accession cohort for O-7s and above or for O-6s. There was a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) for O-5s and below.

[15] There was a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between shares of the officer inventory and shares of the relevant accession cohort for O-5s and below and O-6s. There was no statistically significant difference for O-7s and above.

[16] Data presented in other issue papers and decision papers indicate that offsetting differences in promotion and retention make the career progression of black officers similar to that of white officers. Specifically, compared with white officers, black officers tend to have lower promotion but higher retention rates. For Hispanic officers, there is evidence that higher retention rates outweigh lower promotion rates to result in better career progression overall, especially relative to black officers.

Figure 1. Percentages of Blacks and Hispanics Among FY 2008 Officer Inventory and the Corresponding Accession Cohorts, DoD-wide



SOURCE: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, FY 2002–FY 2008.

Demographic Profiles of Recent Military Accessions

As described previously, the Services have a number of recruiting programs targeted toward increasing the demographic diversity of enlisted and officer accessions. Although we do not have data on the individual effectiveness of each program, data on recent accessions provide a baseline measure of how well current recruiting practices are working to attract qualified candidates from all demographic groups. Therefore, using the same datasets as above (PRR and CPS), the following sections show the demographic profiles of recent enlisted and officer accessions and highlight demographic groups that appear to be not well represented within recent accession shares compared with their representation within the eligible recruiting pool. These figures are intended to be descriptive in nature only. In examining whether a group is representative of the eligible recruiting pool, we calculated representation indexes (RI) in which each RI is equal to the ratio of the reference group's share of accessions to its share of the eligible recruiting pool. Values greater than one indicate some degree of overrepresentation, values less than one indicate some degree of underrepresentation, and values equal to one indicate representational parity. As a rule of thumb, we labeled a group as having over or underrepresentation based on whether there was at least a +/– 0.10 difference from 1.0.[17]

Demographic Profiles of Recent Enlisted Accessions

In Figures 2–6, we show the racial, ethnic, and gender profiles of enlisted accessions by Service. Each figure compares the FY 2007–2008 accession shares by race, ethnicity, and gender with the relevant

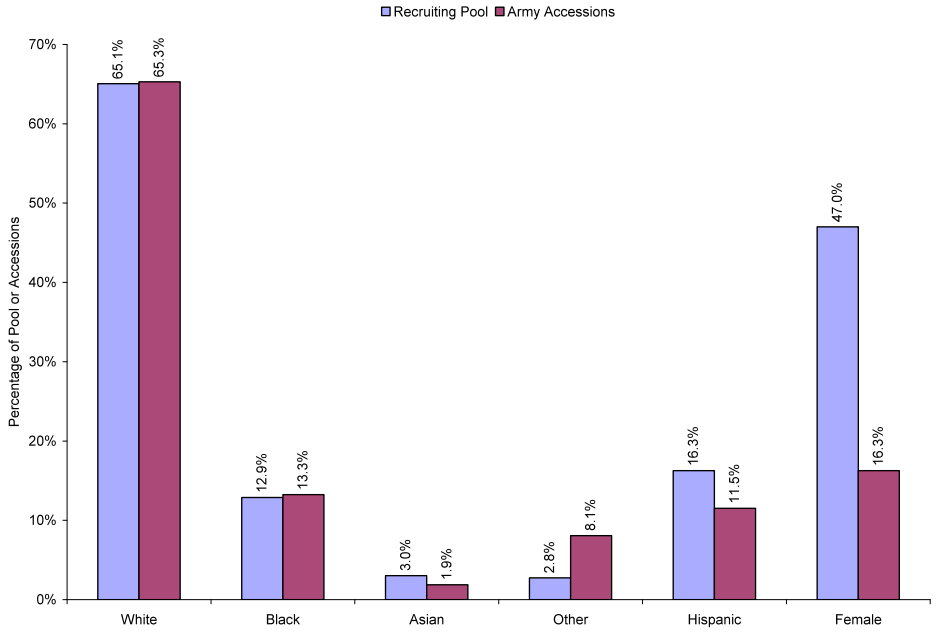
[17] All differences between shares of accessions and the eligible recruiting pool that are reported in the text are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). However, representation indexes are presented to be consistent with other MLDC work examining demographic representation.

group's share of the eligible recruiting pool. The eligible recruiting pool is defined as labor force participants (i.e., people who are either employed or actively seeking work) who hold high school degrees or equivalents through four years of college (but no bachelor's degree) and are between the ages of 18 and 24. (These recruiting pool percentages are the same across figures.)

Army Enlisted Accessions

Figure 2 shows the racial, ethnic, and gender profile of recent enlisted Army accessions. The figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, black enlisted accessions had approximate representational parity (RI = 1.03), while others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were overrepresented among accessions (RI = 2.89). Hispanics and Asians were underrepresented (RI = 0.71 and 0.63). In terms of gender, women were also underrepresented, comprising only 16 percent of recent enlisted accessions (RI = 0.35).

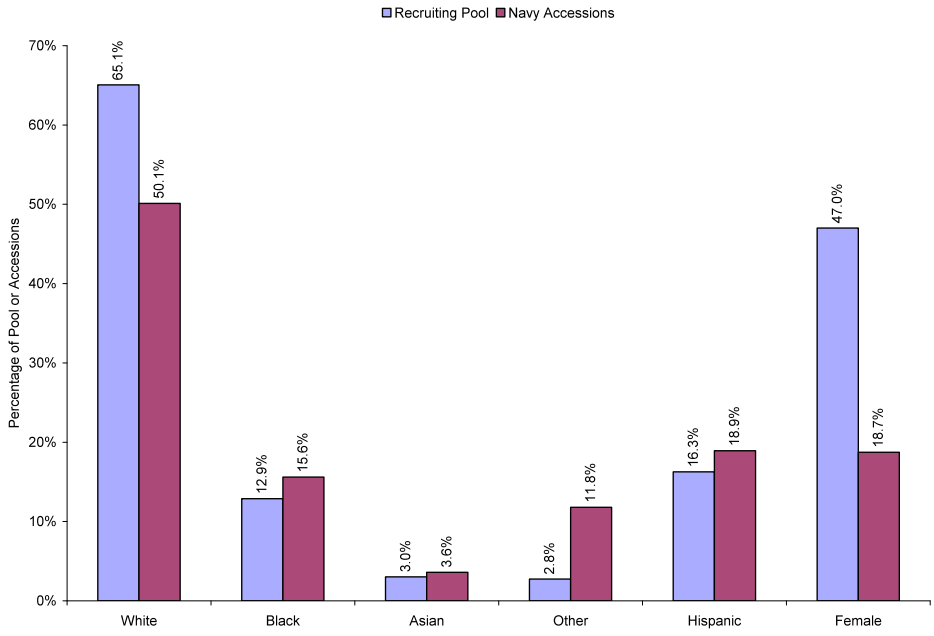
Figure 2. Army FY 2007–2008 Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool



Navy Enlisted Accessions

Figure 3 shows the racial, ethnic, and gender profile of recent enlisted Navy accessions. The figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, all racial and ethnic minority groups were actually overrepresented among recent accessions (RI > 1). In terms of gender, however, women were underrepresented, comprising only 18.7 percent of recent enlisted accessions (RI = 0.40).

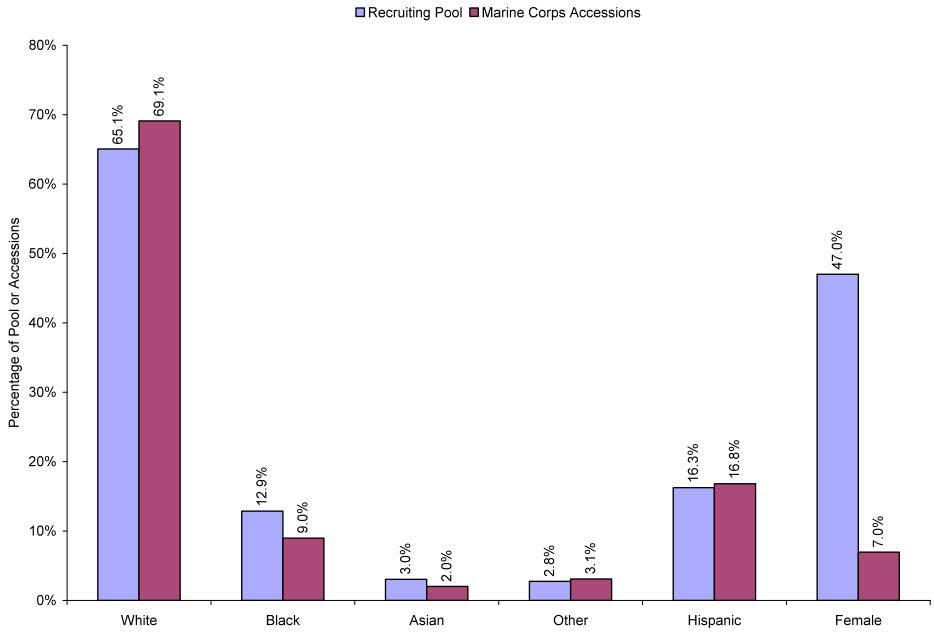
Figure 3. Navy FY 2007–2008 Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool



Marine Corps Enlisted Accessions

Figure 4 shows the racial, ethnic, and gender profile of recent enlisted Marine Corps accessions. The figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were slightly overrepresented (RI = 1.11). Hispanics had approximate representational parity (RI = 1.03). Blacks and Asians were underrepresented (RI = 0.70 and 0.67). In terms of gender, women were again underrepresented, comprising only 7 percent of recent enlisted accessions (RI = 0.15).

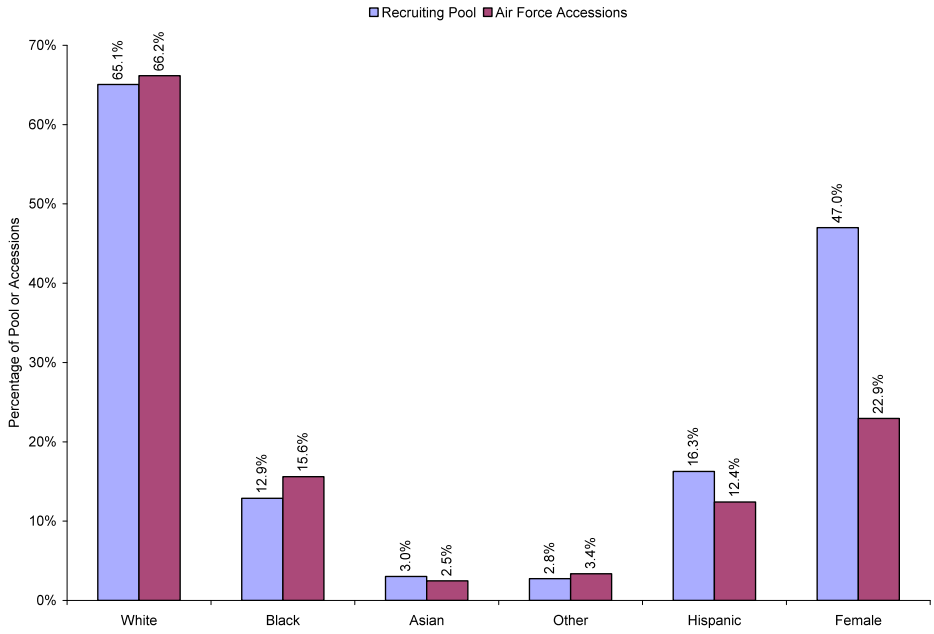
Figure 4. Marine Corps FY 2007–2008 Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool



Air Force Enlisted Accessions

Figure 5 shows the racial, ethnic, and gender profile of recent enlisted Air Force accessions. The figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, blacks and others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were overrepresented among recent accessions (RI = 1.21 and 1.21), while Hispanics and Asians were underrepresented (RI = 0.76 and 0.83). In terms of gender, women were underrepresented but made up a larger portion of accessions compared with the other Services, with close to 23 percent (RI = 0.49).

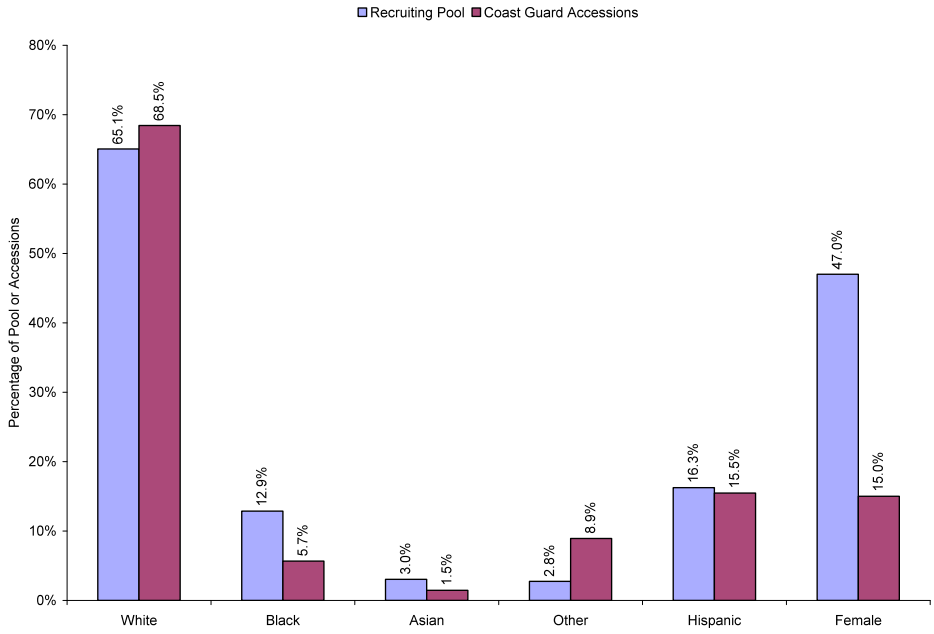
Figure 5. Air Force FY 2007–2008 Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool



Coast Guard Enlisted Accessions

Figure 6 shows the racial, ethnic, and gender profile of recent enlisted Coast Guard accessions. The figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, Hispanics had close-to-approximate representational parity (RI = 0.95), while others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were overrepresented (RI = 3.18). Blacks and Asians were underrepresented (RI = 0.44 and 0.50). In terms of gender, women were again underrepresented, comprising only 15 percent of recent enlisted accessions (RI = 0.32).

Figure 6. Coast Guard FY 2007–2008 Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool



Summary of Enlisted Accessions

There is considerable variation across the Services regarding racial and ethnic representation in recent (FY 2007 and FY 2008) enlisted accessions. With the exception of the Navy, which had some degree of overrepresentation of every nonwhite racial and ethnic group, each Service had one or more minority groups that were underrepresented to some degree based on the calculated RI compared with their representation in the eligible recruiting pool:

- Hispanics and Asians were underrepresented in recent Army accessions.
- Blacks and Asians were underrepresented in recent Marine Corps accessions.
- Hispanics and Asians were underrepresented in recent Air Force accessions.
- Blacks and Asians were underrepresented in recent Coast Guard accessions.

Additionally, women comprise close to 50 percent of the eligible recruiting pool but were underrepresented in recent accessions across all Services, comprising only 7 (Marine Corps) to 22 percent (Air Force) of recent enlisted accessions. It is important to note, however, that not all

occupations are open to women in every Service. Therefore, the lower representation of women in recent accessions is likely influenced by the lower number of occupations open to women.[18]

Demographic Profiles of Recent Officer Accessions

There are four primary accession sources for commissioned officers in the U.S. Services:

- Service academy
- ROTC
- OCS or OTS
- direct appointment.

The four Service academies (the U.S. Military Academy [USMA, Army], the U.S. Naval Academy [USNA, Navy and Marine Corps], the U.S. Air Force Academy [USAFA], and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy [USCGA]) are four-year degree–granting institutions. To apply for admission, high school graduates must meet basic academic, leadership, and physical fitness requirements. Applicants to USMA, USNA, or USAFA must also receive a nomination, usually from a member of Congress or the President or Vice President of the United States.[19]

College students pursuing four-year bachelor's degrees outside of a Service academy can join an ROTC program for the Air Force, Army, or Navy; students interested in being officers in the Marine Corps can go through the Navy ROTC program. The Coast Guard does not have an ROTC program. In addition to the normal college curriculum, ROTC programs require specific course work in military-related subjects. ROTC participants may or may not receive a Service-paid scholarship, which covers tuition and fees and includes a stipend (Thirtle, 2001).

College graduates who want to serve as military officers must enter an officer candidate or training school. Each Service has its own training school and programs within the schools. The Air Force has OTS; the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard have separate OCSs. The training programs at these schools vary in length from 12 to 17 weeks, and the curricula are Service specific. The ultimate goal of all the programs is, however, the same: to produce new officers for commissioning. The key feature of the OCS/OTS programs is their flexibility. Because they are shorter—a few months, rather than the four years required by the academies and ROTC—they give the Services the ability to rapidly increase or decrease the number of officer accessions in response to changes in officer end strength requirements (Thirtle, 2001).

Finally, direct appointments are given to officers who do not pass through a typical commissioning program. These direct commission officers (DCOs) are usually civilians who have specific technical backgrounds considered critical for mission readiness. For example, DCOs typically serve in occupations requiring advanced education, including law, medicine, and the chaplain corps (Thirtle, 2001).

Data on recent accessions again provide a baseline measure of how well the Services are doing in recruiting and eventually commissioning a demographically diverse group of officers. Using FY 2007 and FY 2008 PRR data, Table 3 identifies the various officer commissioning sources and shows the average percentage of new officers that accessed from each source for each Service in FY 2007–2008. As described above, there are some discrepancies in the data that were never resolved by the Services, particularly in terms of missing data. As a result, accession data for some Services are missing

[18] See Issue Paper #26 for a discussion of the appropriate benchmark for female representation.

[19] For more information, see Kirby et al., 2010.

information on commissioning source and race and ethnicity categories. Throughout this section, we make note of any abnormal cases of missing data that should be viewed with caution.

Table 3 shows that there was substantial variation in the importance of each source across Services, with some Services not using some sources at all. The data also show that for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, the accession source was not known for a substantial number of accessions.

Table 3. Average Percentage of Accessions by Service and Accession Source/Commissioning Program, FY 2007–2008

Source/Program	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marine Corps	Coast Guard
Service academy	14%	21%	24%	12%	23%
	(1,052)	(824)	(1,026)	(226)	(110)
ROTC, nonscholarship	15%	0.04%	25%	0	0
	(1,105)	(17)	(1,070)		
ROTC, scholarship	27%	19%	15%	10%	0
	(2,044)	(748)	(646)	(198)	
OCS/OTS	26%	15%	13%	68%	22%
	(1,924)	(610)	(540)	(1,280)	(103)
Direct appointment	15%	20%	23%	0	<1%
	(1,158)	(799)	(957)		(2)
Other	3%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
	(219)	(1)	(2)	(6)	
Unknown	<1%	24%	<1%	10%	54%
	(15)	(945)	(6)	(180)	(257)
Total number	7,515	3,942	4,246	1,890	472

SOURCES: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, FY 2002–FY 2008. The Marine Corps Recruiting Command provided additional data on its recent accessions.

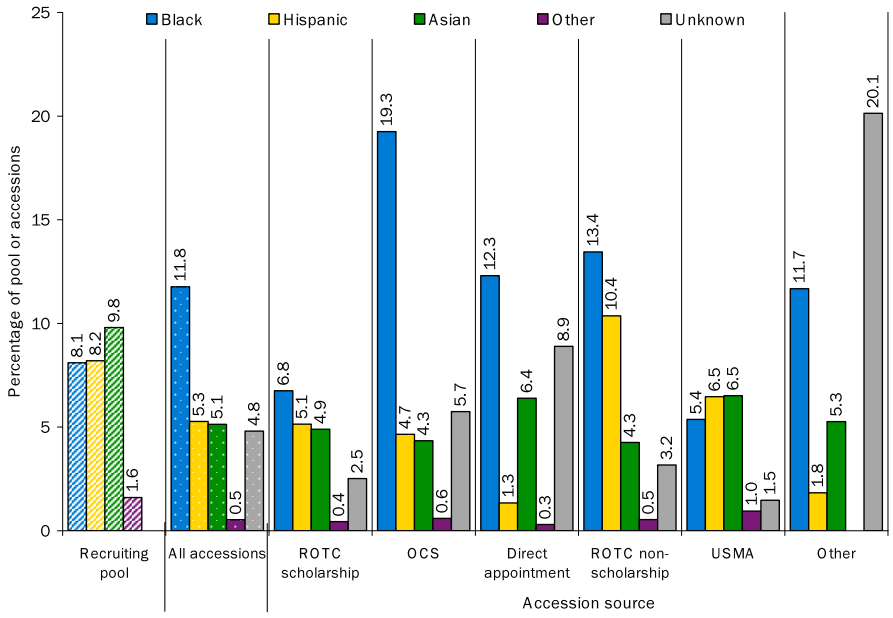
NOTES: Raw numbers are in parentheses. Because these numbers represent average accessions across FY 2007 and FY 2008, the average number of accessions from each source may not sum exactly to the total number due to rounding.

In Figures 7–12, we show the demographic profiles of recent officer accessions across these various commissioning sources for each of the Services. Each figure compares the FY 2007–2008 accession shares with the relevant group's share of the eligible recruiting pool. The eligible recruiting pool is defined as labor force participants (i.e., people who are either employed or actively seeking work) who hold at least a bachelor's degree and are between the ages of 22 and 34.

Army Officer Accessions

Army officer accessions came from all seven sources identified in the PRR data. The commissioning programs that produced the most accessions for the Army over FY 2007 and FY 2008 were the ROTC scholarship program (27 percent) and OCS (26 percent). Figure 7 shows the racial and ethnic profile of all Army officer accessions and of accessions from each source. Overall, the figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, blacks were overrepresented among Army accessions (RI = 1.45), while Hispanics, Asians, and others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were underrepresented (RI = 0.65, 0.52, and 0.31). The data also show that all racial and ethnic minority groups appear to be underrepresented among accessions from the ROTC scholarship program and among academy accessions. Thus, all racial and ethnic minority groups appear to have been underrepresented among the Army's main scholarship programs. Blacks appear to have been overrepresented in all other commissioning sources, and Hispanics were overrepresented in the ROTC nonscholarship program.

Figure 7. Army FY 2007–2008 Officer Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool

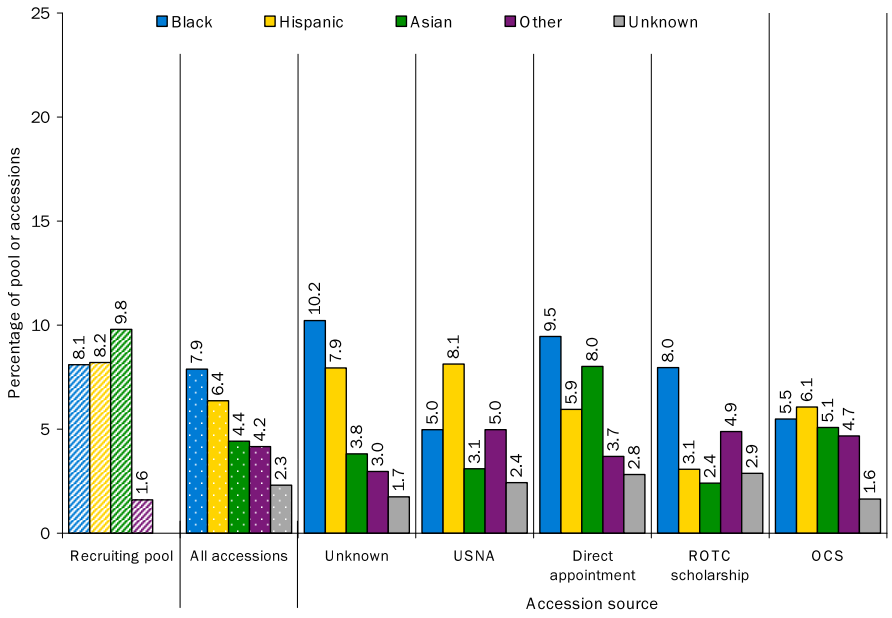


NOTES: The accession sources are pictured from left to right in descending order of numbers of accessions. Data for accessions from "unknown" sources are not pictured because there were fewer than 50 accessions in the two years combined.

Navy Officer Accessions

For the Navy, nearly a quarter of accessions came from unknown accession sources. Among known accession sources, Navy accessions were fairly evenly distributed across four key commissioning programs: the USNA, direct appointments, the Navy ROTC scholarship program, and OCS. Figure 8 shows the racial and ethnic profile of all Navy officer accessions and of accessions from each source. Overall, the figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were overrepresented among Navy accessions (RI = 2.63), while blacks had approximate representational parity (RI = 0.98), and Hispanics and Asians were underrepresented (RI = 0.78 and 0.45). There are also three notable differences by accession source. First, the data show that Hispanics were particularly underrepresented among accessions from the ROTC scholarship program but had approximate representational parity among academy accessions. Second, blacks were underrepresented among academy accessions. Third, blacks and Asians had relatively high representation among direct appointments.

Figure 8. Navy FY 2007–2008 Officer Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool

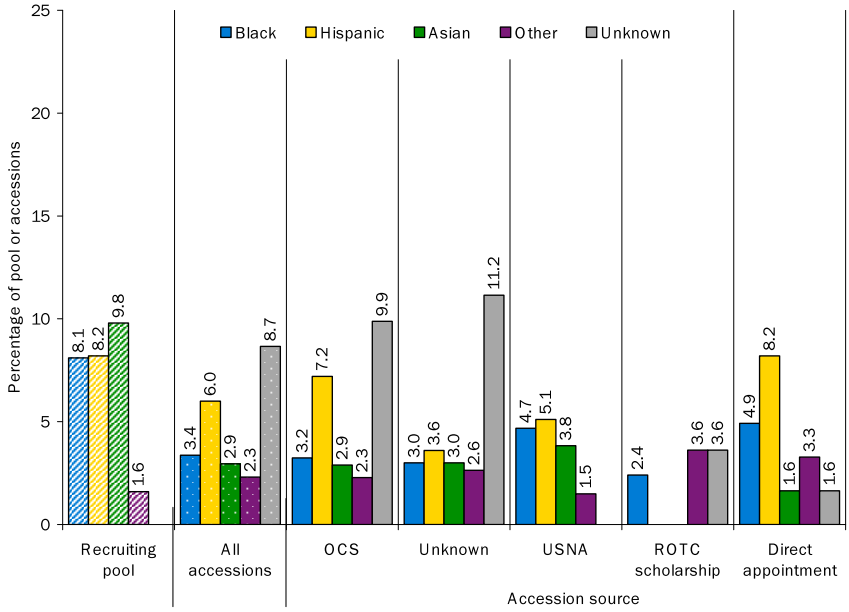


NOTES: The accession sources are pictured from left to right in descending order of numbers of accessions. Data for accessions from the ROTC nonscholarship program and from "other" sources are not pictured because there were fewer than 50 accessions in the two years combined.

Marine Corps Officer Accessions

For the Marine Corps, by far the largest accession source is OCS (62 percent). The other important sources were "unknown" (22 percent) and the USNA (13 percent). Figure 9 shows the racial and ethnic profile of all Marine Corps officer accessions and of accessions from each source. Overall, the figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were overrepresented among Marine Corps accessions (RI = 1.44), but all other minority groups were underrepresented, especially blacks and Asians (RI < 1). The data also show little variation across the three main accession sources. Hispanics, however, had a notably small presence among academy accessions compared with other accession sources. This is in contrast to the Navy, in which Hispanics had a relatively large share of academy accessions. Importantly, there were also no reported Hispanic or Asian accessions through the ROTC scholarship program.

Figure 9. Marine Corps FY 2007–2008 Officer Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool

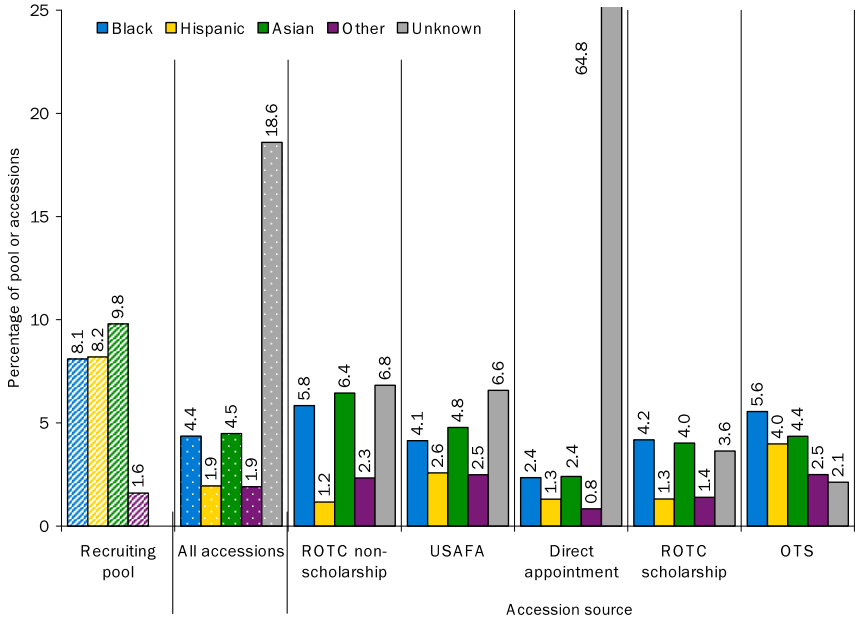


NOTES: The accession sources are pictured from left to right in descending order of numbers of accessions. There were no Marine Corps accessions from a nonscholarship ROTC program or from "other" accession sources.

Air Force Officer Accessions

Seventy percent of Air Force accessions in FY 2007 and FY 2008 were spread fairly evenly across three main accession sources: the nonscholarship ROTC program, the USAFA, and direct appointments. The remaining 30 percent of accessions came from the ROTC scholarship program and OTS. Figure 10 shows the racial and ethnic profiles of all Air Force accessions and of accessions from each source. Overall, the figure shows that all traditional minority groups except others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") appear to have been underrepresented among Air Force accessions in FY 2007–2008, especially Hispanics (RI < 1). The figure also shows, however, that there were a substantial number of accessions in which race and ethnicity were unknown. The degree of unknown race and ethnicity accessions is so large that it calls into question the accuracy of the data and the conclusions for the other groups.

Figure 10. Air Force FY 2007–2008 Officer Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool

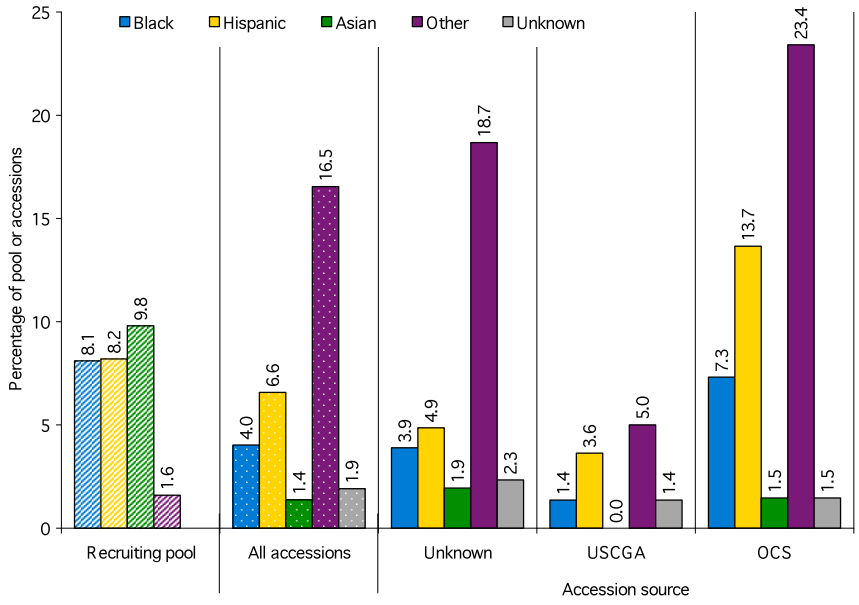


NOTES: The accession sources are pictured from left to right in descending order of numbers of accessions. Data for accessions from the "other" and "unknown" sources are not pictured because there were fewer than 50 accessions in the two years combined.

Coast Guard Officer Accessions

Figure 11 shows the racial and ethnic profiles of all Coast Guard officer accessions and of accessions from each source. Overall, the figure shows that blacks and Asians were underrepresented among Coast Guard accessions (RI = 0.49 and 0.14); Hispanics were also underrepresented, but to a lesser degree (RI = 0.80). The figure also shows that others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were substantially overrepresented among Coast Guard accessions (RI = 10.31). However, others are so overrepresented that the accuracy of the data and the conclusions for the other groups is in question. Nevertheless, compared with their presence among all accessions, minority presence among academy accessions is low: The share for Asians is 0 percent, and even the other shares are low. In contrast, among OCS accessions, Hispanics are overrepresented. OCS also has the largest portion of blacks, compared with the other accession sources.

Figure 11. Coast Guard FY 2007–2008 Officer Accessions Versus the Recruiting Pool

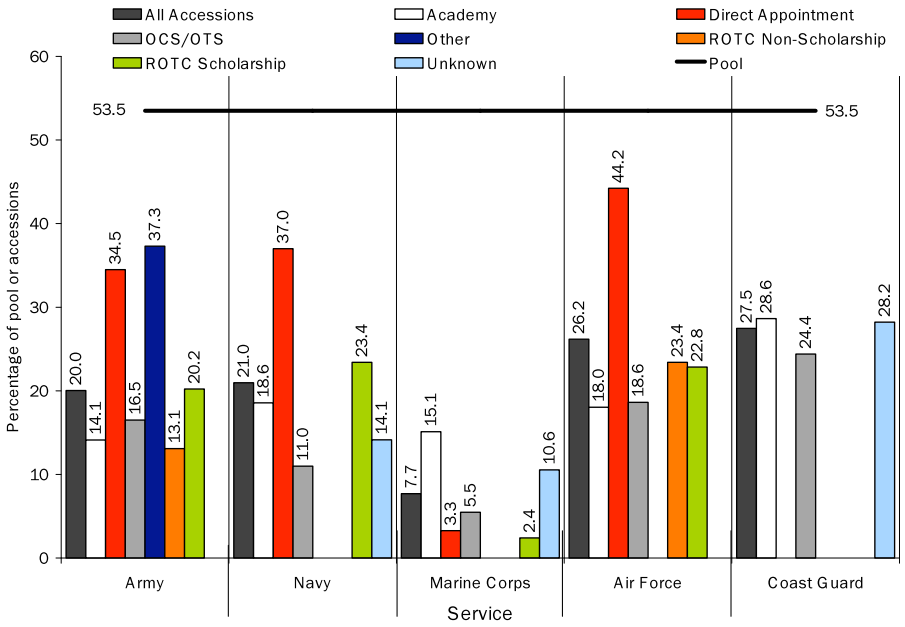


NOTES: The accession sources are pictured from left to right in descending order of numbers of accessions. Data for accessions from direct appointments are not pictured because there were fewer than 50 accessions in the two years combined; there were no Coast Guard accessions from "other" sources, and the Coast Guard does not have an ROTC program.

Female Officer Accessions in All Services

Figure 12 compares women's shares of officer accessions for each Service and each accession source to the women's share of the officer recruiting pool, which was 53.5 percent in 2008. The figure shows that, relative to the recruiting pool, women were underrepresented among accessions for all Services and from every accession source (RI < 1). Overall, women had the lowest representation among Marine Corps accessions and the highest representation among Air Force and Coast Guard accessions.

Figure 12. FY 2007–2008 Female Officer Accession Shares Versus the Recruiting Pool



For each Service, Figure 12 also shows the variation in female shares across accession sources in FY 2007–2008:

- For the Army, female representation was greatest among direct appointments and accessions from other sources, while female representation was lowest among nonscholarship ROTC accessions.
- For the Navy, female representation was greatest among direct appointments and lowest among OCS accessions.
- For the Marine Corps, female representation was greatest among academy accessions; female representation was relatively low among OCS accessions, the Marine Corps' largest accession source.
- For the Air Force, female representation was greatest among direct appointments and lowest among academy and OTS accessions.
- For the Coast Guard, female representation did not vary greatly by accession source.

Two notable cross-Service patterns are revealed by these data. First, in the Army, Navy, and Air Force, female officer accession shares were highest among direct appointments. Second, women tend to be underrepresented among OCS/OTS accessions relative to accessions from other programs.

Again, it is important to note that not all occupations are open to women in every Service, likely influencing the lower representation of women in recent accessions.

Summary of Officer Accessions

Like recent enlisted accessions, there is considerable variation across the Services and, in particular, across the commissioning sources regarding racial, ethnic, and gender representation in recent (FY 2007–2008) officer accessions. Overall, the data show that across the Services, there appear to have been several underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in the various officer commissioning sources based on the calculated RI:

- Hispanics, Asians, and others (American Indians, Pacific Islanders, Alaska natives, and "more than one race") were underrepresented among recent Army officer accessions.
- Hispanics and Asians were particularly underrepresented in recent Navy officer accessions.
- Hispanics, blacks, and Asians were underrepresented among recent Marine Corps officer accessions.
- Hispanics, blacks, and Asians were underrepresented among recent Air Force officer accessions. However, the degree of "unknown" racial and ethnic accessions in the data was so large that it calls into question the accuracy of the data and the conclusions for the other groups.
- Hispanics, blacks, and Asians were underrepresented among recent Coast Guard officer accessions.

In addition, although women comprise over 50 percent of the recruiting pool, they comprise a much smaller percentage of overall officer accessions.

Thus, based on the data for recent enlisted and officer accessions, if the Services would like to reflect the demographics of the larger eligible population, there must be further improvements in the outreach and recruiting efforts targeting members of underrepresented demographic groups.

THE IMPACT OF MILITARY ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ON DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY

One of the key strategic concerns identified by the outreach and recruiting subcommittee, and a potential reason for low minority representation in accessions, is the fact that racial and ethnic minorities qualify for military service at lower rates than do whites. The recruiting pool benchmarks presented in the previous section are proxy measures based on age and educational degree limitations. However, the Services have additional requirements that can even further reduce the eligible pool of individuals. In particular, individuals who desire to serve in the military must meet standards related to their age, citizenship, number of dependents, financial status, education level, aptitude, substance use, language skills, moral conduct, height and weight, physical fitness, and medical qualifications (Asch et al., 2009).[20] Together, these requirements define the eligible population from which the Services can recruit. However, these requirements do not affect all demographic groups in the same way. Racial and ethnic minorities and, in some cases, women tend to meet these requirements at lower rates than whites and men.[21] For example, a recent study found that "[o]nly 45, 32, and 35 percent of white, black, and Hispanic males are eligible to enlist in the Marine Corps, the service with the cumulatively least stringent enlistment standards" (Asch et al., 2009, p. 41).

The Impact of Enlistment Requirements

For enlisted personnel, there are several key requirements across the Services that tend to disqualify racial and ethnic minorities and women at higher rates than whites and men. These include educational degree requirements, single-parent status, minimum scores on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT), and height and weight standards. For example, according to 2008 statistics from the U.S. Department of Education, Asians/Pacific Islanders had a high school completion rate of 96 percent and whites a completion rate of 94 percent, compared with 88 percent for blacks and only 68 percent for Hispanics. Furthermore, as population trends increase the demographic diversity of the pool of young adults from which the Services recruit, demographic differences in educational attainment—particularly college completion—will increasingly drive a wedge between the eligible population and the broader U.S. population.[22] On average, blacks and Hispanics also tend to have lower scores on the AFQT, a composite of several subtests on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), which is a standardized aptitude test given to all individuals interested in enlisting. According to a recent study by Asch et al. (2009), roughly 80 percent of white youth would score above the 30th percentile of the AFQT (which is the eligibility cutoff for service in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force), while only 49 percent of black youth and 53 percent of Hispanic youth would score above the 30th percentile. Finally, women tend to be disqualified at higher rates than men for being single parents and for not meeting weight and

[20] In certain circumstances, some of these eligibility requirements can be waived. Which requirements and when they are permitted to be waived varies by Service.

[21] See Issue Paper #5.

[22] See Issue Paper #11.

body fat requirements.[23] According to the same study, "[a]pproximately 25–35 percent of young adult men and 50–60 percent of young adult women, regardless of race or ethnicity, would fail the weight standards of at least one branch of service" (Asch et al., 2009, p. 118). Trends in obesity indicate that this problem is likely to increase in the future, affecting both genders and all race and ethnicity groups.[24]

To illustrate the impact of these requirements on the demographic profile of eligible recruits, Figure 13 provides a comparison of the total relevant-age population in the United States to an estimate of the eligible population using some basic Marine Corps enlistment requirements. The first set of bars shows the fractions of non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, others (Asians, American Indians/Alaska natives, Pacific Islanders, and unknown or missing race and ethnicity),[25] and women in the U.S. population ages 17–29 (the age range to be eligible for enlistment in the Marine Corps). The second set of bars shows the estimated fractions of relevant-age members of each minority race and ethnicity group and of women in the eligible population, which, in this case, means the population of high school graduates and above who are not single parents, have no more than one dependent, score at or above the 32nd AFQT percentile, have not committed felonies, meet Marine Corps height and weight standards for enlistment, and have no disqualifying medical condition (e.g., asthma, hypertension, diabetes, a physical disability).[26] As the figure shows, racial and ethnic minorities (except for others) and women make up a smaller fraction of the eligible population than they do of the total 17–29-year-old U.S. population because they are, on average, less likely to meet the requirements.[27]

[23] Whether women are disqualified at higher rates depends on which Service's body-fat requirements are applied. The Army and Marine Corps tend to disqualify women at higher rates than men, while the Air Force and Navy standards tend to disqualify both genders at equal rates.

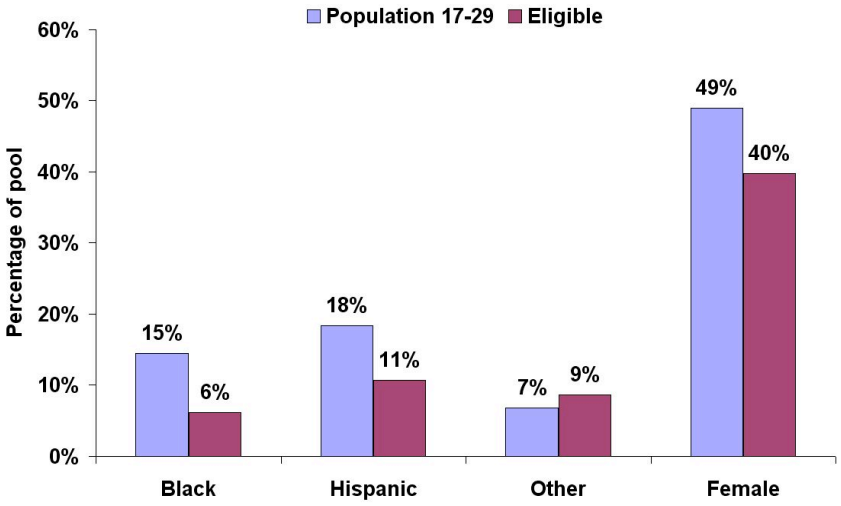
[24] See Issue Paper #2.

[25] The *other* category includes Asians, American Indians/Alaska natives, Pacific Islanders, and unknown or missing race and ethnicity. In survey data, the fraction of unknown or missing values is typically small, so this category is mostly Asians. Anyone who entered a Hispanic ethnicity in addition to their race is coded as Hispanic, and the white and non-Hispanic black categories contain no one who is also Hispanic.

[26] These calculations include people with General Educational Development certificates (GEDs) because many survey data sets do not differentiate between traditional high school diplomas and GEDs.

[27] For all groups, there was a statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between the population and the eligible pool.

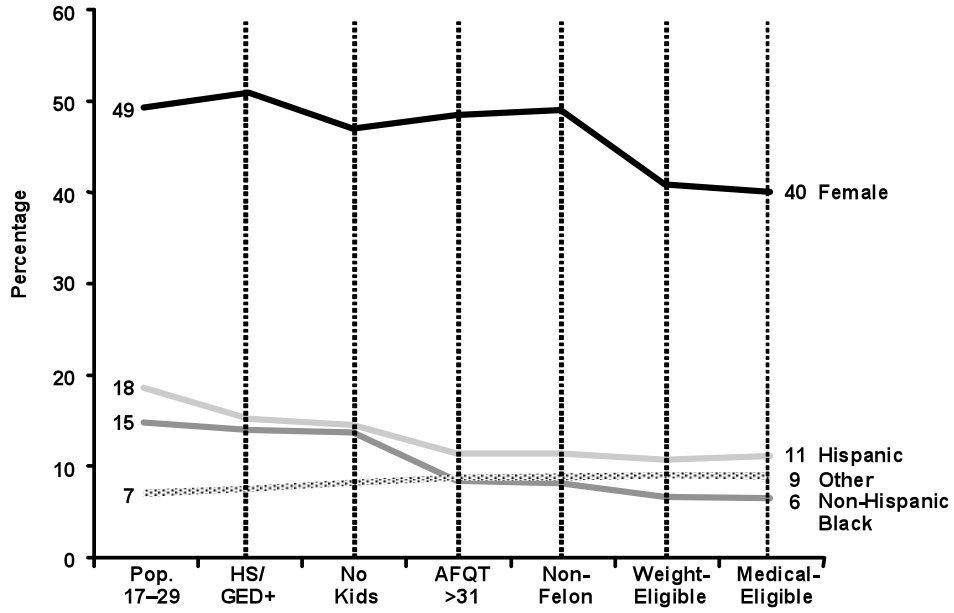
Figure 13. U.S. Population Versus Estimated Population Eligible to Enlist: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Composition



SOURCES: Author's calculations from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006; *NLSY97 User's Guide*, 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.

To illustrate the effect of individual requirements, Figure 14 shows how the percentage shares of the eligible population for each demographic group change with the successive addition of each new requirement. In particular, this shows that the share of non-Hispanic blacks and Hispanics decreases considerably with the addition of education and AFQT requirements. For women, their share of the eligible population is especially decreased with the addition of weight and body-fat requirements. Thus, Figures 13 and 14 show how the Marine Corps requirements shape the profile of the population that is eligible to enlist in that Service. Although there will be some differences in how the other Services' requirements shape the profiles of their eligible populations, the overall patterns and effects are the same.

Figure 14. The Cumulative Effect of Individual Requirements on the Demographic Composition of the Eligible Enlisted Population



SOURCES: Author's calculations from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006; *NLSY97 User's Guide*, 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.

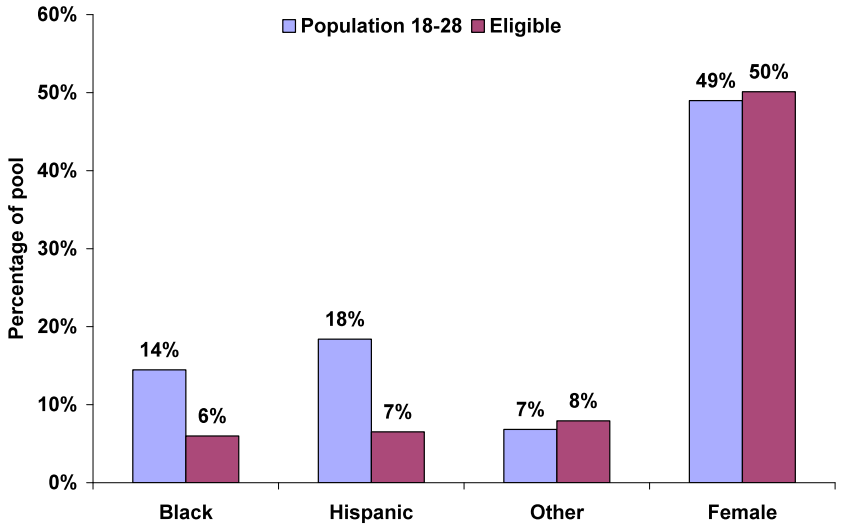
The Impact of Officer Commissioning Requirements

Patterns of demographic diversity are similar in relation to the eligible population for officers. To receive a commission as an officer into the Armed Forces, individuals must have U.S. citizenship, must have a bachelor's degree, and must have completed a commissioning program (ROTC, OCS/OTS, Service academy, or direct appointment), each of which has its own unique standards for admission. Similar to enlistment standards, they must also meet height and weight standards, as well as have no disqualifying medical conditions.

Again using Marine Corps requirements as an example, Figure 15 shows how these combined requirements affect the officer-eligible population. The first set of bars shows the fractions of non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, others (Asians, American Indians/Alaska natives, Pacific Islanders, and unknown or missing race and ethnicity), and women in the U.S. population ages 18–28 (the age range eligible for a commission as a Marine Corps officer). The second set of bars then shows the estimated fraction of relevant-age members of each group that is eligible to become an officer based on Marine Corps requirements. This time, the eligible population is the population of college graduates who are U.S. citizens, who meet Marine Corps height and weight standards, and who have no disqualifying medical conditions. As the figure shows, racial and ethnic minorities (except for others) make up a smaller fraction of the eligible population than they do of the total relevant-age population because they are, on average, less likely to meet the requirements. In the case of women, however, the requirements have virtually no effect on the share of women in the eligible population versus the total population. [28]

[28] Although we refer to there being little difference between the female share of the population and the eligible pool, all comparisons between the population and the eligible pool showed a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$). This is likely because of the very large sample size.

Figure 15. U.S. Population Versus Estimated Population Eligible to Be Officers: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Composition

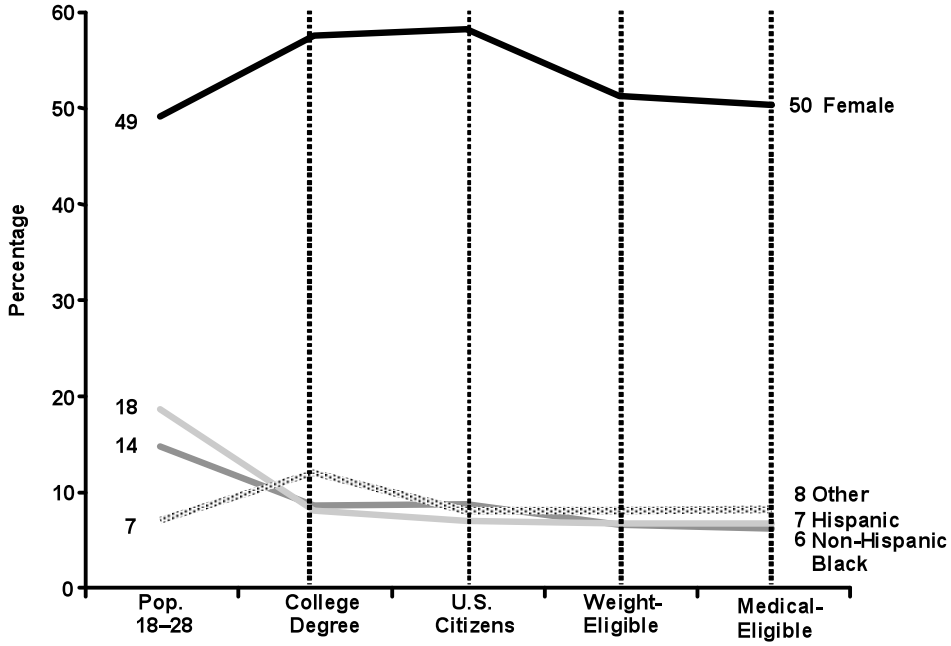


SOURCES: Author's calculations from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.

Figure 16 now shows how the percentage shares of the eligible population for each demographic group change with the successive addition of each requirement. In particular, this shows that the share of non-Hispanic blacks and Hispanics decreases considerably with the addition of the college degree requirement, while it increases female and other representation.[29] For women, their share of the eligible population is again decreased with the addition of weight and body-fat requirements.

[29] The order of the requirements is arbitrary. We could have applied the citizenship requirement before the college-attainment requirement, and it would have shown a "bigger" effect among Hispanics.

Figure 16. The Cumulative Effect of Individual Requirements on the Demographic Composition of the Eligible Officer Population



SOURCES: Author's calculations from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.

Summary

As illustrated above, the requirements to enlist and to become a commissioned officer shape the demographic profile of eligible recruits, with racial and ethnic minorities and, in some cases, women being disqualified at higher rates. Although there will be some differences in how the other Services' requirements shape the profiles of their eligible populations, the overall patterns and effects are the same. These same requirements also dramatically reduce the overall size of the eligible pool of qualified candidates from which the Services can recruit; in addition to decreasing the number of racial and ethnic minorities and women that are eligible, they also decrease the number of white men that are eligible for Service, just at lower rates. This suggests that the Services have two main options for increasing the demographic diversity of accessions: (1) develop and engage in activities to expand the pool of qualified candidates and (2) engage in activities to improve recruiting from the currently available pool of qualified candidates.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Recommendations

Recommendation 1—

The shrinking pool of qualified candidates is a threat to national security. All stakeholders should develop and engage in activities that will expand the pool of qualified candidates.

Individuals who desire to serve in the military must meet requirements related to their age, citizenship, number of dependents, financial status, education level, aptitude, substance use, language skills, moral conduct, height and weight, physical fitness, and medical qualifications (Asch et al., 2009). Together, these requirements define the eligible population from which the Services can recruit. Currently, however, a large portion of young people is not eligible to join the military. In fact, statistics released by the Pentagon show that 75 percent of young people ages 17–24 are currently unable to enlist in the U.S. military (Gilroy, 2009). Furthermore, racial and ethnic minorities and, in some cases, women tend to meet these eligibility requirements at lower rates compared with whites and men.

This lack of eligibility among today's youth has been identified as a key concern in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, which states that "in coming years, we will face additional challenges to our ability to attract qualified young men and women into the armed forces. Among them are a large and growing proportion of youth who are ineligible to serve in the military for medical, criminal, ethical, or physical reasons" (p. 51). This issue of eligibility was also echoed in informational sessions that the Outreach and Recruiting Subcommittee held with recruiters from across the Service branches. The recruiters identified failures to meet current entrance requirements as a key challenge to their ability to successfully recruit youth into the Armed Forces. Finally, it was echoed as a major issue by General Colin Powell when he addressed the Commission in March 2010 and has been called out as a critical problem by an organization called MISSION: READINESS, led by nearly 90 retired military leaders.

Therefore, the Commission's first recommendation is for all stakeholders to develop and engage in activities that will expand the pool of qualified candidates. The intention of this recommendation is not to lower standards but instead to involve stakeholders in activities designed to bring the qualifications of today's youth up to par with current eligibility requirements. There are four different courses of action the Commission is advocating as part of this recommendation.

Recommendation 1a—

The President, Congress, and State and Local officials should develop, resource, and implement strategies to address current eligibility issues.

Our military readiness, and thus our national security, will depend on the ability of the upcoming generation to serve. Therefore, a shrinking pool of eligible individuals presents a critical issue to our military readiness. Although this particular national security issue is well outside the sphere of control, mission, responsibility, and resources of DoD and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), it is the collective national security responsibility of the President, Congress, and state and

local officials. These top officials have the deep understanding and powerful capability to turn the tide on this issue by developing and executing strong, united, action-oriented programs to improve eligibility and by crafting, resourcing, and implementing an integrated and sustainable set of strategies. Addressing goals, such as high-quality early education and appropriate in-school fitness plans, can ensure that more young Americans meet the standards of the U.S. military and that the military will be capable of keeping America strong and safe.

Recommendation 1bi—

[DoD and DHS (Coast Guard) should] Create and leverage formal partnerships with other stakeholders.

It is not part of DoD or DHS' mission to address the educational attainment issues or other problems affecting the youth of U.S. society. However, given the large number of youth who are not qualified for military service, particularly racial and ethnic minorities, DoD and DHS could partner with other federal departments, federal agencies, or state and district agencies whose job it is to address these issues. Therefore, the Commission recommends that DoD and DHS develop or expand current formal partnerships with such entities as the U.S. Department of Education (ED), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), or similar agencies at the state and district levels.

As a first step in these partnerships, one of the main goals should be to expand ongoing or previous partnerships that have been successful.[30] For example, DoD and ED have formed successful partnerships in the past to develop programs focused on at-risk youth. These include the JROTC Career Academy and the Troops to Teachers program. DoD and DHS could also partner with HHS, which is responsible for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services. For example, HHS would be an obvious ally in addressing obesity trends.[31] Finally, specific Services have also developed partnerships that can provide examples of programs that could be implemented across the Services. For example, the Army has established a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the National Association of State Boards of Education to study K–12 educational improvement. Thus, although it is not within the purview of DoD to address the disqualification issues of today's youth, the above partnerships provide examples of collaborations in which DoD could engage with those agencies whose job it is to address these issues.

Recommendation 1bii—

[DoD and DHS (Coast Guard) should] Institutionalize and promote citizenship programs for the Services.

In an effort to further expand the pool of qualified candidates, the Commission recommends institutionalizing and promoting successful citizenship programs. One such program is the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) program, which was authorized as a pilot program on November 25, 2008, by the Secretary of Defense.

Although noncitizens have served in the military throughout history, changes in law have limited their service. According to Title 10, Section 504(b)(1), enlisted personnel must be U.S. citizens,

[30] See Issue Paper #16.

[31] See Issue Paper #2.

lawful permanent residents of the United States (green card holders), or citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or Palau. This requirement disqualifies thousands of otherwise eligible legal noncitizens from service in the U.S. military. However, a provision within this same law allows a Service secretary to authorize the enlistment of a person regardless of citizenship status if the secretary determines that such enlistment is "vital to the national interest" (10 U.S.C. § 504 (b)(2), 2009). This provision is the basis of the MAVNI program and, before the inception of this program, was used only in extremely rare cases.

The MAVNI program expands the eligible recruiting market to noncitizens who do not have green cards but are legally present in the U.S. if they are licensed health care professionals or speak at least one of 35 critical foreign languages. This includes noncitizens with certain student or work visas, refugees, asylees, and individuals with temporary protected status. These individuals are then eligible to become naturalized citizens if they serve honorably in an active duty status during a time of "armed conflict with a hostile foreign force" (8 U.S.C. § 1440), which is invoked by Executive Order. The current Executive Order is Ex. Or. No. 13,269 of July 3, 2002, 67 Fed. Reg 45,287, July 8, 2002. Therefore, no new legislation was needed to create the MAVNI program, but the program can only be implemented during wartime or hostile conflict to enable the MAVNIs to obtain U.S. citizenship. (Without U.S. citizenship, the MAVNIs would become illegal aliens once their visas expired.)

Like all servicemembers, the MAVNIs have an eight-year service obligation. Per DoD guidance, the language enlistees must serve at least the first four of those years on active duty. The health care professionals are officers and may serve on active duty or in the Selected Reserve. MAVNI recruits are screened prior to accession, but these procedures are currently under review and are likely to be enhanced. Individuals who fail to serve honorably for at least five years may be subject to the revocation of their citizenship.

Not only do the MAVNI recruits represent individuals with specialized skills that could greatly benefit the military, but they also tend to be at the higher end of qualified recruits. For example, most MAVNI recruits have college degrees. Because of the large demand for entry into the program, the Army requires an aptitude test score in the top 50 percent. MAVNI recruits are also not eligible for conduct waivers and are screened by DHS and the Department of State.

The Secretary of Defense permitted up to 1,000 accessions across the Services to MAVNI recruits during the first year of the pilot program, the bulk of which were approved for the Army. To date, the Army has contracted 792 enlisted personnel with language and culture skills in at least 30 of 35 critically needed languages and 143 health care professionals. This has been achieved without paid advertising. Over 13,000 individuals have applied for the MAVNI program via the Army's website, requesting that a recruiter contact them.

Thus, MAVNI represents a viable option in expanding the eligible recruiting pool to highly qualified, legal noncitizens who greatly increase linguistic and cultural diversity throughout the military, as well as racial and ethnic diversity. The Commission recommends institutionalizing this pilot program to make it a permanent Service option and increasing the number of slots available for eligible MAVNI candidates. In addition, the Commission recommends allowing other critically needed specialties to access via MAVNI and exploring the possibility of expanding the program to the Reserve Components (currently only MAVNIs who are health care professionals can serve in the Reserve Components). Finally, although there are many barriers to clearance and citizenship for officers, the Commission also recommends exploring ways to expand MAVNI to precommissioning officer programs, such as ROTC.

Recommendation 1biii—

[DoD and DHS (Coast Guard) should] Require the Services to review and validate their eligibility criteria for military service.

As a final course of action for expanding the pool of qualified candidates, DoD should require the Services to review their enlisted and officer eligibility requirements to ensure that all requirements are mission essential. This recommendation is in no way advocating lowering the entrance standards for enlisted or officer personnel. Instead, this recommendation is intended to ensure that all of the Service requirements are necessary and have been validated. In other words, the goal of this recommendation is to ensure that no individual is unnecessarily excluded from serving. Furthermore, ensuring that all requirements have been validated or are important predictors of key performance outcomes within each Service will help select the best candidates to join the military, regardless of demographic background.

The purpose of any selection test or entrance standard is to select individuals who will perform well or be successful in a job. In order to make sure that the selection requirements being used are doing a good job of selecting the best people, it is essential that the selection tests or tools are validated or examined to ensure that they predict future performance-related outcomes (Schmitt & Chan, 1998). There has already been extensive research done to validate many military requirements, such as the ASVAB (e.g., Armor & Roll, 1994; McHenry et al., 1990; Ree & Earles, 1992). Therefore, those requirements that have been validated as strong predictors of key performance-related outcomes should continue to be used by the Services, while those that have not been validated should be examined as to whether they are good predictors of key performance-related outcomes. Furthermore, each requirement is not used in isolation but is part of a larger selection system, such as the use of SAT/ACT scores along with an interview and other ratings of leadership and athletic ability to inform selection decisions. Therefore, it is also important that the entire selection system be validated to assess the extent to which these selection tools in combination do a good job of predicting key performance-related outcomes.

Recommendation 2—

DoD and the Services should focus their outreach efforts on early engagement. They should conduct strategic evaluations of the effectiveness of their current K–12 outreach programs and practices. To that end, they should increase resources and support for those that are found to be effective.

The Commission's second recommendation is that DoD and the Services should focus on early engagement to help bring the skills of youth up to par with military requirements by conducting strategic evaluations of the effectiveness of their current K–12 outreach programs and increasing resources and support for programs that are found to be effective. This recommendation goes hand in hand with the first recommendation to expand the pool of qualified candidates. Part of expanding that pool is focusing on students before they drop out of school, acquire criminal convictions, or develop weight problems. The Commission is not advocating that any programs directed toward young children be used as recruitment tools, but that these early engagement programs are used to develop successful future citizens.

As described above, the Services have a variety of programs for K–12 youth. These programs range from programs designed to help students stay in school to programs focused specifically on

introducing youth to STEM. However, for the most part, it does not appear that the Services are evaluating these programs to determine the extent to which they achieve their stated goals.

To ensure that the most-successful programs are continued or even expanded and to identify potential gaps in the focus of current K–12 programs, the Commission recommends that the Services conduct strategic evaluations of the effectiveness of their current K–12 outreach programs. At a minimum, the programs should be evaluated for the extent to which they improve performance on key eligibility requirements, such as physical fitness, high school graduation rates, and aptitude test performance. The programs should also be evaluated for their ability to improve key skills necessary for the future military force, such as STEM skills. This evaluation does not mean just examining the extent to which programs addressing these problems exist but should involve establishing clear outcome criteria for each program that can be measured and assessed for effectiveness.

Following this strategic evaluation, DoD and the Services should focus on increasing resources for programs that have been found effective at addressing some of the primary disqualification factors, with a special focus on those programs targeting students in middle school before many problems arise. This way, the Services will be devoting resources to the best possible programs.

In addition, the Commission recommends exploring ways to increase funding for JROTC. As discussed previously, there do not appear to have been any studies examining the effectiveness of JROTC on key outcomes, such as graduation rates, while controlling for self-selection bias. However, the Services track JROTC participants' attendance, high school graduation rates, indiscipline rates, dropout rates, and GPAs in comparison to the rest of the school. On these outcomes, JROTC participants tend to outperform their nonparticipating peers. Based on this evidence, the Commission feels that JROTC appears to provide an important opportunity for outreach to racial and ethnic minorities and is associated with positive outcomes, indicting the potential for it to expand the pool of qualified youth not only for military service but for the general workforce.

Finally, it is also important to note that there are nonprofit organizations outside of the Services that provide education and training to familiarize students with military culture, such as the Army Cadet Corps, Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program, Young Marines, Devil Pups (Marines), NSCC, and NLCC. Since these programs are not under the authority and control of the Services, they were not included as part of the strategic evaluation recommendation above. However, the Services may also want to explore whether these programs are effective in producing desired outcomes and whether the Services could provide additional resources to benefit such programs.

Recommendation 3—

DoD and the Services should engage in activities to improve recruiting from the currently available pool of qualified candidates.

The third and final overarching recommendation is to engage in activities to improve recruiting of members of underrepresented demographic groups from the available pool of qualified candidates. Specifically, the Commission recommends that the Services do this by

- creating, implementing, and evaluating a strategic plan for outreach to, and recruiting from, untapped locations and underrepresented demographic groups
- creating more accountability for recruiting from underrepresented demographic groups
- developing a common application for Service ROTC and academy programs

- closely examining the prep schools' admissions processes and making required changes to ensure that accessions align with the needs of the military.

Recommendation 3a—

Create, implement, and evaluate a strategic plan for outreach to, and recruiting from, untapped locations and underrepresented demographic groups.

As a first step in improving recruiting from the currently available pool of qualified candidates, the Commission recommends that DoD and DHS require each of the Services to create, implement, and evaluate a strategic plan for outreach and recruiting from untapped locations and underrepresented demographic groups. All of the Services currently have recruiting strategies directed at demographically diverse populations, including many promising outreach programs. The Commission would like to see these initiatives continue and expand by having the Services evaluate the effectiveness of current spending on minority marketing and recruiting initiatives and then develop a clear strategic plan that will be submitted to DoD (or DHS, in the case of the Coast Guard) for evaluation. Importantly, this is consistent with the recommendation of the Implementation and Accountability Subcommittee, which focuses on the importance of the Services developing strategic plans to implement their diversity policies. The strategic plan should include

- a dedicated portion of the recruiting budget and staff to focus on underrepresented demographic groups
- leveraging the presence of minority officers in each recruiting area
- continuing current efforts to engage key community influencers and affinity groups
- robust metrics to track the success of recruiting from underrepresented demographic groups. (Currently, the Services track the demographic diversity of accessions, and this should be continued. However, not all of the Services track potential demographic differences in attrition from the various precommissioning officer programs.)

Finally, the strategic plan should include an examination of untapped recruiting markets of qualified racial and ethnic minorities. Below, we highlight two potential avenues for pursuing untapped locations.

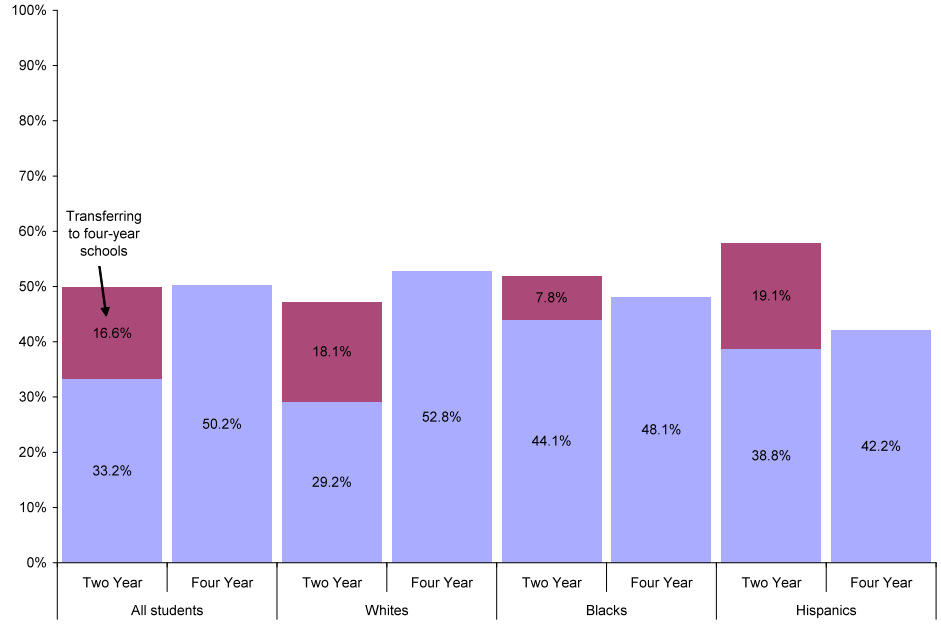
Explore Recruiting at Two-Year Colleges

One of these untapped markets for recruiting high-quality candidates is two-year colleges. As Figure 17 shows, close to 50 percent of all students in college attend two-year colleges, with slightly higher percentages of blacks and Hispanics attending two-year colleges than average. Specifically, close to 60 percent of Hispanics attending college go to two-year colleges, and a little over half of blacks attending college go to two-year colleges. Furthermore, research done for the Navy found that those with two-year college degrees had higher test scores and higher continuation and reenlistment rates than those with only high school degrees (Kraus et al., 2004). Similarly, other research suggests that two-year college students have high enlistment potential given that they are likely both to be interested in enlistment and able to meet military eligibility requirements (Kilburn & Asch, 2003). Therefore, two-year colleges represent a potentially rich market for recruiting not only high-quality enlisted recruits but also Hispanic and black recruits.

Two-year colleges also represent a potentially rich market for ROTC recruits. One must have completed a bachelor's degree before commissioning through an ROTC program. However, as

Figure 17 shows, nearly 17 percent of all students attending two-year colleges transfer to four-year colleges. This includes roughly 19 percent of Hispanics and 8 percent of blacks who later transfer to four-year colleges. Therefore, these percentages represent members of underrepresented demographic groups that could be targeted for ROTC.

Figure 17. Demographic Differences in Student Attendance at Two-Year and Four-Year Colleges

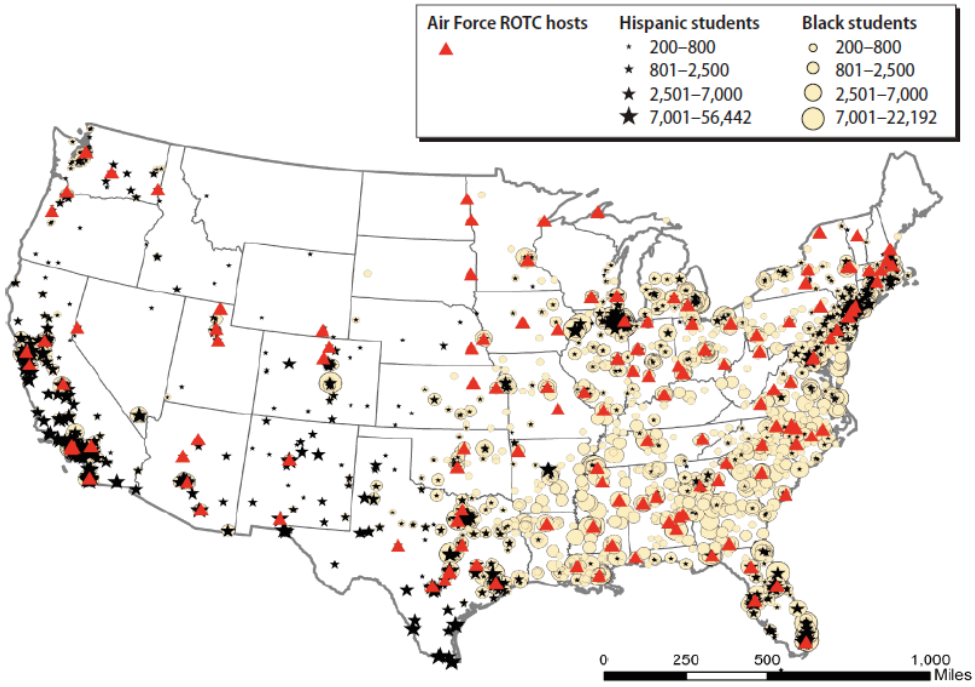


SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, 2008.

Examine Expanding ROTC Hosts to More Demographically Diverse Locations

A second way to improve recruiting from the current pool of qualified candidates is to ensure that ROTC host locations match the geographic distribution of student populations. More specifically, to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of ROTC officer production, it makes sense to place host units in locations that have large markets of racial and ethnic minority college students but no current ROTC presence. As an illustration of this point, the map shown in Figure 18 uses Air Force ROTC locations. All Air Force ROTC host locations are identified by red triangles. The locations of black students are represented by circles, with larger circles indicating larger populations. The locations of Hispanic students are represented by stars, with larger stars indicating larger populations. Locations that have large populations of black students and/or Hispanic students but no ROTC host represent potential areas for expanding ROTC diversity and production of officers. The map shows that there are potentially rich markets in Texas, the Southeastern U.S., California, and the mid-Atlantic coast. Of course, locations of other Service ROTC units should be taken into account when examining potential areas for expansion.

Figure 18. Comparison of Air Force ROTC Host Locations and Student Body Demographics



SOURCES: National Center for Education Statistics, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.

In addition, given that the Services have limited resources and that the location of ROTC sites involves many stakeholders, the Commission recommends instituting an independent council that is similar to the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) to evaluate and decide where new ROTC units should be placed and where unproductive ROTC units would best be moved. Utilizing the BRAC process could help depoliticize ROTC closures and relocations to ensure that host units could be located in the best locations for meeting the military's current needs. The Commission also recommends that a key factor considered as part of the BRAC process is the extent to which ROTC host units are located at colleges and universities with large student populations of racial and ethnic minorities.

Recommendation 3b—

Create more accountability for recruiting from underrepresented demographic groups.

As an accompaniment to Recommendation 3a, the Commission also recommends that DoD and the Services create more accountability for recruiting racial and ethnic minorities and women by (1) developing goals for qualified minority applicants to precommissioning officer programs, (2) developing formal processes for coordinating enlisted and officer recruiting, and (3) working to improve congressional nominations to the Service academies.

Goals for Qualified Minority Applicants

The Services have long employed incentive programs for recruiters to ensure that designated accession goals are met. This includes setting goals for the total number of accessions, as well as goals for recruiting individuals with specific attributes, such as a high aptitude level (e.g., AFQT score) or

specific skills or degrees (see Oken & Asch, 1997). Following this tradition, one way to ensure that there is a demographically diverse candidate pool from which to select applicants into precommissioning officer programs would be to develop goals for minority applicants. This is a strategy currently employed by the Navy and Marine Corps but not by the other Services. Therefore, as a first step toward improving accountability, the Commission recommends that the Services develop recruiting goals for qualified minority applicants to precommissioning officer programs. The goals would not be used during the actual admissions decision in any way but would help ensure that there is a demographically diverse pool from which to draw. These goals should also be developed in careful consideration of the demographics of the eligible population.

Enlisted and Officer Recruiting Coordination

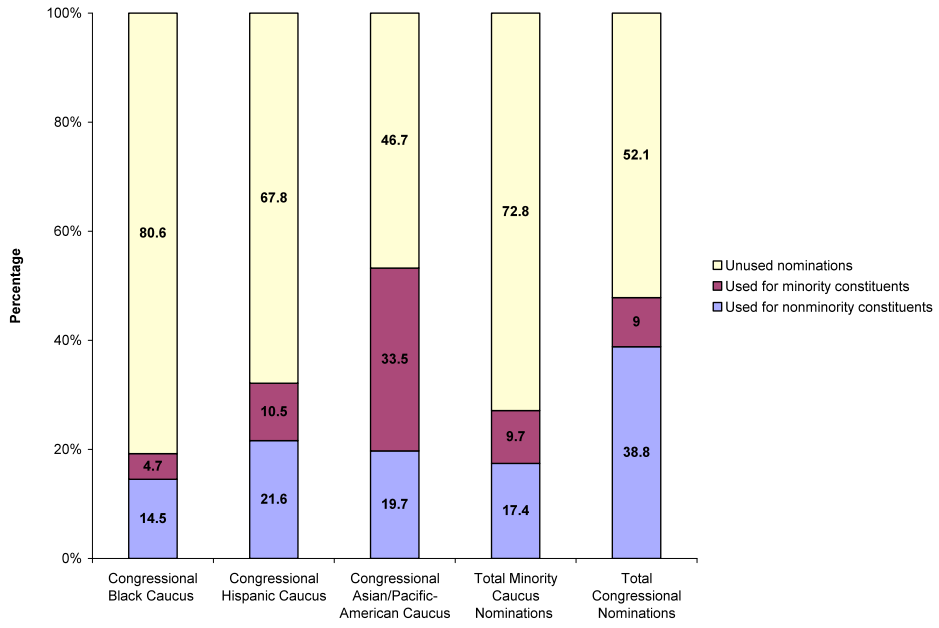
The Commission also recommends that the Services explore developing formal processes for coordinating enlisted and officer recruiting. Except in the Coast Guard, enlisted recruiters are primarily focused on finding enlisted recruits. If they find a prospect with a bachelor's degree, they are required to refer that person to the highest program for which he or she is eligible and must have him or her sign a waiver if he or she would prefer to enlist instead of join an officer commissioning program. However, this coordination does not necessarily apply for high-quality applicants without a bachelor's degree, even if they have the potential to be successful in a precommissioning officer program. This issue was raised in informational meetings the subcommittee held with recruiters from across the Services, who commented that it is not often that they refer recruits to, or even inform recruits about, officer opportunities unless explicitly asked. Even then, they said they usually have little information to provide on applying to precommissioning officer programs. Therefore, a formal coordination process between enlisted recruiters and academy and ROTC programs could help ensure that qualified applicants from all demographic backgrounds have the opportunity to become officers.

Congressional Academy Nominations

Finally, since a considerable number of nominations to the Service academies go unused every year, the Commission recommends that Congress improve its use of academy nominations. In addition to meeting the minimum eligibility requirements, applicants to the DoD Service academies must secure a nomination to apply.[32] There was general agreement among the Service academy representatives who briefed the Commission in October 2009 that available nomination slots are not fully utilized. For example, the Air Force provided the Commission with recent data on nominations to the Air Force Academy. As Figure 19 shows, a large percentage of Air Force Academy nominations go unused. Similar patterns were reported by the other Services as well. Furthermore, recent media reports have highlighted that lawmakers from areas with large racial and ethnic minority populations tend to rank near the bottom in making nominations for appointment to the academies (Witte, 2009). However, it is not always clear why nominations go unused in particular districts. For example, it may be that there are few interested candidates or that certain districts have fewer qualified candidates.

[32] For USAFA, the nomination must come from a member of Congress or the Vice President of the United States (U.S. Air Force, 2009b). For USMA, the nomination can be a service-connected nomination or congressional nomination (U.S. Army, 2007). For USNA, the nomination must come from a member of Congress, the Vice President, or the President of the United States (U.S. Marine Corps, 2010). A nomination is not necessary for applying to the USCGA.

Figure 19. Congressional Nominations to USAFA, Class of 2013



SOURCES: U.S. Air Force, 2009a, slides 31–34 and 36; author's calculations.

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, is currently engaging congressional members to improve their use of nominations. In addition, the Services report the use of programs designed to educate congressional members and staffers about their academies, including campus visits and tours. Thus, efforts to engage congressional members in the academy nomination process are ongoing. The goal of this recommendation is both to encourage Congress to improve their use of nominations and to ensure that any current OSD efforts to improve congressional nominations are sustained for the long term.

Recommendation 3c—

Develop a common application for Service ROTC and academy programs.

Currently, youth interested in applying to Service academies or ROTC programs have to fill out a separate application for each program and Service, which requires an extensive time commitment. In addition, some youth may not be aware of all the precommissioning officer programs and may overlook opportunities in an ROTC program, for example. The Services currently report having formal sharing of applicant files between Service ROTC and academy programs to help ensure that quality applicants do not get passed over. However, the reported success of this coordination and whether it takes place before or after application deadlines is inconsistent across the Services. To improve and standardize this coordination, the Commission recommends the development of a common application and application process for Service ROTC and academy programs. (This is an example of an effort that the Navy is currently exploring.) Through such coordination, applicants could apply to either one or both programs simultaneously instead of filling out two separate applications, which would ensure that prospective students are exposed to all options for becoming an officer.

Recommendation 3d—

Closely examine the prep schools' admissions processes and make required changes to ensure that accessions align with the needs of the military.

Based on data provided by the Services, the prep schools are currently an important source of racial and ethnic minority enrollment at the Service academies. However, study of prep school records suggests that there is a large focus on developing athletes to enter into the academies. Of recent classes, approximately 35–40 percent of each of the prep schools consisted of recruited athletes. Although physical fitness is an important characteristic for military officers, the Commission had some concern that there may be too much of a focus on the preparation of athletes for the Service academies over individuals with other skills that may be more beneficial to the current and future needs of the military. Therefore, the Commission recommends that DoD have the prep schools closely examine their admissions processes and make any required changes to ensure that accessions align with the needs of the future military workforce.

Conclusion

The military operates as a closed personnel system, with today's senior leaders being composed entirely of those members who accessed into the military more than 25 years ago. Therefore, the demographic diversity of accessions directly influences the demographic diversity of future senior leaders. The demographic diversity of accessions is influenced by both the demographic diversity of the population eligible to serve and the ability of current outreach and recruiting efforts to attract qualified members of underrepresented demographic groups. Currently, however, racial and ethnic minorities, and, in some cases, women, are disqualified for military service at higher rates than whites and men. Therefore, the eligible population is not as diverse as the U.S. population as a whole. In addition, data show that racial and ethnic minorities and women are still underrepresented compared with the eligible population in recent accessions across many of the Services, indicating that current outreach and recruiting efforts need to further improve. The Commission made recommendations focused both on ways to help expand the pool of qualified candidates and on ways to improve recruiting from the currently available pool of qualified candidates. Ultimately, the goal of these final recommendations is not only to improve the demographic diversity of accessions and subsequent senior leader cohorts but also to expand the entire pool of individuals from which the military can recruit.

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